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The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
46,439

Has society bred a new type of murderer?

Random killers

G2 with European weather



Society

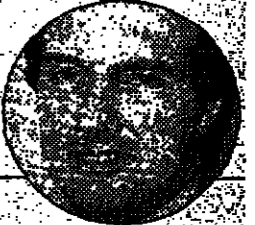
How the West children coped

G2 page 11

Will Hutton on a best-seller's first anniversary

The State we're (still) in

This section page 9



Selection in schools 'to return'

Move to boost flagging opt-outs

John Carvel
Education Editor

THE Government is considering abandoning a central plank of comprehensive education to allow all state schools to select their intake by interviewing children and parents to assess suitability.

In a move to boost the flagging momentum of the policy to encourage schools to opt out of local authority control, proposals for scrapping the ban on selective admissions policies will be published for consultation next week by Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary.

She is expected to argue that the measure would allow all schools greater freedom to run their affairs. In practice, selection is likely to be taken up mainly by the 1,100 grant-maintained schools which have opted for self-governing status and want more efficient methods of rationing their places.

Under the present rules, most schools are not allowed to give preferential access to high-achieving pupils. According to a Government circular updated in 1993, they should not require pupils to sit a test or use any other form of selection procedure.

"Schools which do not select on the basis of ability or aptitude should in general avoid using reports or formal admission arrangements, except in the case of church schools where reports and interviews may help the school to understand the family's religious background... Governing bodies may otherwise be vulnerable to criticism

that judgments about a child's suitability were based on social, ethnic or academic considerations," the current circular says.

The London Oratory, a grant-maintained school chosen by Tony Blair for his son, Euan, was accused of operating a policy of social selection by interviewing parents. Roy Hattersley, Labour's former deputy leader, led a rebellion at the party conference in October against coming to terms with self-governing schools.

He argued that social selection was anathema to the comprehensive ideal.

The Government may now be hoping that permitting social selection will play well with middle class voters and may prise open splits within Labour on an issue which has become closely identified with Mr Blair.

Mrs Shephard's consultation paper will propose scrapping its guidance on admissions to allow schools to compete more fiercely by having greater control over their own destiny. It is also expected to remove restrictions obliging grant-maintained schools to seek Government approval before changing catchment areas.

Schools would have a free hand to introduce overt selection procedures to admit up to 10 per cent of pupils by aptitude in subjects such as music, art, drama, sport and technology. They could also amend policy on admitting siblings or the children of governors and teachers without ministerial approval.

The proposals may take some of the political sting out of Mrs Shephard's announcement next week that the Government is to drop plans to allow church schools a fast track for opting out without having to ballot parents. The

idea was vociferously opposed by the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches.

The Grant Maintained Schools and Nursery Bill is expected to offer little extra inducement for opting out. Measures will be included to allow grant-maintained schools to borrow against their assets, but this is unlikely to revive the momentum of the policy which Mr Major wants to be a main Conservative theme at the next election.

According to data from Local Schools Information, a council-funded monitor of the grant-maintained sector, only 17 schools voted last term for self-governing status.

Mrs Shephard would not need legislation to change the rules allowing schools to select pupils by interview. The proposal could therefore be used to give a pre-selection flip to Mr Major's objective of giving self-governing status to all schools.

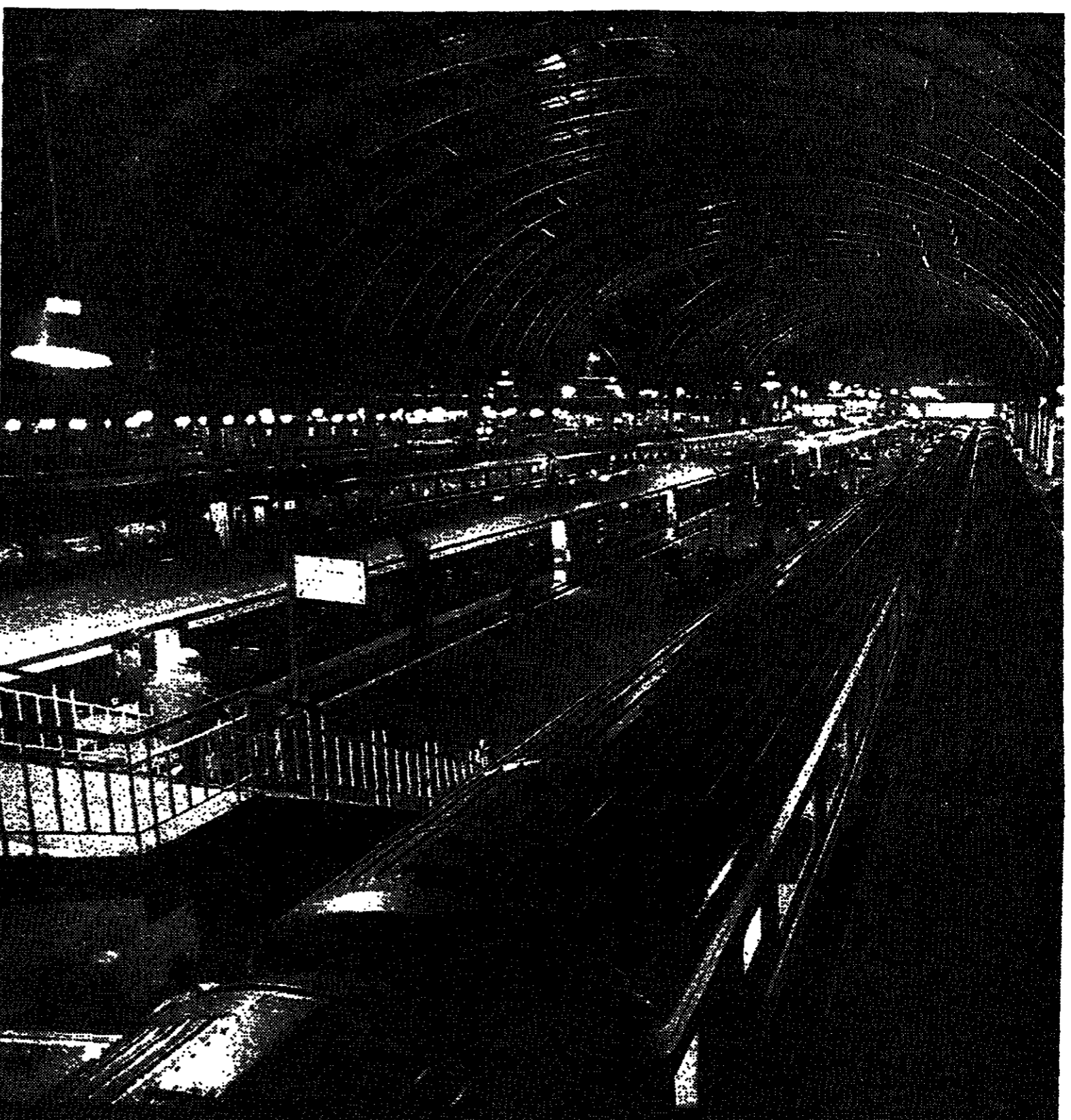
In September, he offered head teachers of grant-maintained schools "a substantial expansion of your freedom to make sensible choices between pupils in the way you think best".

Alan Parker, education officer of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, said Mrs Shephard's proposal was an insidious restoration of selection which would be even worse than the 11 plus.

"They are not proposing selection on the basis of objective criteria, but a much more nebulous social selection. It is difficult to see how giving a power to head teachers which cannot easily be checked will be in the interests of parents and children. The practical effect of giving maverick head teachers their heads is likely to cause problems and it may become increasingly hard in some areas for parents to educate their children locally."

Andrew Turner, director of the GM Schools Foundation, said any policy which reduced the obligation to apply to the Government for trivial changes in admissions policy was welcome.

Review demanded after survey finds overcharging in 9 out of 10 cases



Tickets to ride... but 250 inquiries by researchers produced a total bill of £13,013 instead of a 'neutral advice' amount of £7,591. PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ARGLES

Rail companies 'bilking travellers over tickets'

Rebecca Smithers
Political Correspondent

RAIL passengers are being overcharged by the newly independent train companies in nine cases out of 10, according to a Consumers' Association survey which has given fresh impetus to the controversy over the Government's privatisation programme.

The findings will renew Tory backbenchers' fears about the sell-off, risking a Commons defeat for John Major in one of the first big tests of his dwindling majority in the wake of Emma Nicholson's defection.

The results of the investigation, published in *Which?* magazine tomorrow, show that the 25 train companies, many of which are now competing for passengers on similar routes since the break-up of British Rail for privatisation, are misleading passengers by failing to provide neutral advice on ticket sales.

A team of researchers bought 57 tickets for five routes, of which 54 were more expensive than the cheapest fare, and in some cases invalid tickets were issued.

In more than 250 inquiries, the total quoted or charged came to £13,013 whereas if neutral sales advice had been followed the figure would have been £7,591.

The association, which until now has adopted a largely neutral stance on the

sell-off, called on the Transport Secretary, Sir George Young, to halt the franchising to review the "deeply flawed" ticket sales.

It concluded that passengers were being misled by the competing companies, which appeared to be prepared to flout licensing conditions "for commercial gain", or had "undertrained or incompetent" staff. Sir George admitted that the survey gave cause for concern but claimed the problem predated privatisation.

However, the Transport Minister, John Watts, said he had asked British Rail's chairman, John Welsby, to carry out an investigation. Yesterday Labour backed the association's call for the sell-off to be halted, and plans to capitalise on the concerns of Tory backbenchers by forcing a rail debate in the Commons in the coming weeks.

The left-wing Conservative MP for Harrow East, Hugh Dykes, said: "The crucial and essential objective which the Secretary of State must be able to guarantee the public is that comprehensive through-ticketing will survive any change in ownership."

British Rail said the report was misleading and unrepresentative, and said that in the four months since the survey was carried out, the companies had undertaken a huge amount of extra training.

Labour's transport spokesman, Brian Wilson, said: "This is a devastating report which goes to the heart of rail privatisation. We have warned from the start that the benefits of an integrated network would disappear if the system is fragmented among dozens of operators. None of them has a loyalty to ensuring the best deal for passengers throughout the network."

Fair's fare?

London to Bath return to arrive by 10.30am:
Competing operators: Great Western, South Wales & West, Cheapest fare: South Wales & West, £23.2K; Highest fare offered, £33

Birmingham to London return to arrive by 10.30am:
Competing operators: InterCity West Coast, InterCity Cross Country, Chiltern Railways, Cheapest fare: Chiltern Railways, £22; Highest fare offered, £25

London to Bristol return to arrive by 10.30am:
Competing operators: Great Western, South Wales & West, Cheapest fare: South Wales & West, £23.2K; Highest fare offered, £37

Cardiff to Swansea day return to London to arrive by 11.15am:
Competing operators: Great Western, South Wales & West, Cheapest fare, £33; Highest fare offered, £33

Ian Brady to challenge press accountability

Owen Bowcott



IAN BRADY, the Moors murderer detained in Ashworth maximum security hospital, has been granted legal aid to launch the first ever High Court challenge of a Press Complaints Commission ruling.

An application for judicial review of the commission's decision — on an article in the Sun last July — has been lodged by his solicitor and a judge's decision is expected within two weeks.

If successful, the challenge could prove to be an unexpected test case for the public accountability of both the PCC and the newspaper industry.

Brady, who attempted to sue the Sunday Express for malicious falsehood in 1994, alleges that an article which appeared in the Sun accompanied by a picture taken with a tele-photo lens was an invasion of his privacy. The story was head-

lined: Well-fed face of evil child murderer Ian Brady.

The original complaint to the PCC was made by the Special Hospitals Service Authority chief executive Charles Kaye, who claimed the story breached the PCC code of practice.

The indistinct photograph of Brady at a window, taken from a public vantage point outside the

perimeter of the building, is alleged to have constituted an invasion of privacy, and harassment, and to have contradicted part of the code requiring journalists to identify themselves to officials when approaching hospitals.

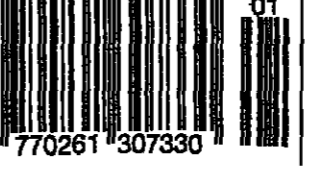
In its submission, the Sun claimed Brady had forfeited all rights to privacy because he was a convicted child killer. Public interest demanded that the press monitored the position of such individuals.

The PCC's adjudication last autumn in effect upheld the Sun's defence. "As well as being a patient at Ashworth, Ian Brady is also a notorious child murderer — a matter in itself which justifies scrutiny of him in the public interest," the commission said.

Brady's solicitor, Benedict Birnberg, said yesterday: "The case raises in a very stark way the whole issue of the press and privacy for those people who are in the public eye."

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Sketch

Off piste and royally fed up



John Duncan

THERE IS always a sense of trepidation at this time of year. Is it going to be a good 12 months, or will it be even worse than last year? Everyone wants a sign, to the point that missing a bus on January 3 or losing at pool to a total donk after missing a simple black becomes something to make or break a whole year.

tor Parker's inability to guard his own body, let alone the prince's, offered a semblance of news, a break from breathless but lifeless royal copy and more reflections on a revolting year, regally speaking. Not that you could ever blame the journalists involved for that, because if the job of bodyguard is tough, being a royal reporter on the piste must be a nightmare — away in a strange expensive place with two weeks of Christmas parties still working their way slowly out of your liver and not a sniffette of a story. The sort of journalistic Krypton Factor they have to go through was well illustrated by yesterday's "press conference".

Unionists back demand for Sinn Fein boycott with threat to Tory majority

David Sharrock, Ireland Correspondent

JOHN Major was under pressure from the Ulster Unionist Party last night to suspend all contact with Sinn Fein until the IRA halts the renewed murder campaign aimed at alleged drug dealers. The Ulster MPs' demands for tough action on the campaign, which has claimed five lives in as many weeks, comes as suspicions deepen once more over republican commitment to peace — and as Mr Major nurses a wafer-thin majority dependent upon the support of unionists.



Ian Lyons, who died after being shot over an alleged drugs connection, with his son Nathan

SDLP Seamus Mallon, said that while the present situation appeared to be deteriorating he believed that the ceasefires would hold. "I believe there are those within the IRA and other paramilitary organisations who are trying to break the peace," he said. "They are trying to use public executions to impose their will upon the entire community."

But as with last month's murders, he refused to condemn the killing of Mr Lyons. Later, Mr Lyons' sister Pauline said he was an innocent victim. "What gives these cowards the right to murder in cold blood an innocent man who was young and energetic, a highly thought-of person on both sides of the community, just to cover up their own illicit dealings?" she asked.

Mr Lyons, considered by police to be an insignificant figure in the world of crime, shot by two gunmen as he left his girlfriend's home on the nationalist Taughnevin estate in Lurgan, Co Armagh. He died later in hospital.

Post-ceasefire murders



- The victims
1 Mickey Mooney, 34. Shot dead on April 28 in a pub in Belfast city centre.
2 Tony Kane, 29. Shot dead on leaving a funeral in Andersonstown, September 5.
3 Paul Devine, 35. Shot as he left his car, December 8.
4 Francis Collins, 40. Former IRA commander, shot dead in front of his wife at his shop in North Belfast, December 18. Leaves five children.
5 Christopher Johnston, 38. On bail at the time of his murder for allegedly trying to smuggle £250,000 of cannabis into Northern Ireland. Ambushed in the Ormeau Road on December 19. Leaves four children.
6 Martin McCrory, 30. Shot dead as he watched TV at home in West Belfast, December 27.
7 Ian Lyons, 31. January 1. First of the current spate of killings to happen outside Belfast. Lyons was shot in Lurgan, Co. Armagh, as he got into a car.

Book review

Unimportance of not being earnest

Henry Porter

Age and Guile: Best Youth, Innocence and a Best Worst PJ O'Rourke; Picador, £15.99
"THE THING I like about Republicans is that they are no damn good at all. I know, I'm one of them." When I read this in PJ O'Rourke's latest collection of pieces, I began to feel just a little weary. For the best part of 25 years, PJ has been telling us what a liberal-hating bastard he is. By now most of us have got the point. For there is little novelty in the idea of someone who grew his hair long and smoked pot in the '60s turning out to be a conservative.

bulimic blond person with a deviated septum and a severe cognitive disorder who went into broadcasting because he or she was too emotionally disturbed for telephone sales work. Despite the irritating technical references, one cannot deny the ingenuity, but why is it the smile dies so easily on my face? I think it is because PJ O'Rourke never really tells you much about Republicans or TV interviewers or for that matter any of the trouble spots he has visited over the years. O'Rourke's real subject is himself, or rather, the tire-some public persona of the Republican delinquent which one can see from this book has been a long time in the making. The early pieces are embarrassing and one is surprised he bothered to keep the underground journals. The strange thing is that O'Rourke can write very well and five or six pieces in this book, in a section called The Truth about the Sixties and Other Fictions are moving, well observed and beautifully told. They are, however, especially funny, which, one senses, makes PJ uncomfortable; he has a terrible aversion to earnestness. At his best, O'Rourke is part of that American tradition of journalistic reminiscence, the best practitioners of which were Hemingway, Menckel and Thurber. In content and attitude O'Rourke lies somewhere between the first two, though perhaps he is not quite in their league. PJ, in the end, is content with self-invention, a pity because he could be so much better as a reporter.

Murky motives for giving drug dealers rough justice

THE reason behind the alarming rise in the number of drug-related criminals linked to drugs is obvious, according to a senior republican in Belfast: "People don't want what's happened in Dublin to happen here," writes David Sharrock. He was quick to point out that no evidence has been presented which shows that the IRA is behind the killings. Even so, the police, community and church leaders are all agreed that Direct Action Against Drugs, the group which claimed the murder on Monday night of Ian Lyons in Lurgan and several other murders before his, is acting on behalf of the IRA. By comparison with the rest of the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland's drugs problem is a minor. Ecstasy is newly fashionable in club culture. Cannabis is on the rise too, but it has long been in use and is no respecter of the traditional divide. By comparison with Dublin, where some inner-city estates have been ravaged by heroin pedlars, strains of credibility. By comparison with the Republic's cosmopolitan capital, Belfast and the rest of Northern Ireland remains a very conservative society. This is reflected in the RUC's seizure figures for last year, with a sharp decline in heroin (down from a kilo in 1994 to half a kilo) and cocaine (34 grammes down to just four). By contrast, cannabis and ecstasy figures were soared. The 22kg of cannabis resin was seized in 1994, last year that figure rose to 157kg, while the number of ecstasy tablets recovered spiralled from 24,000 to almost 137,000.

Detective Inspector Larry Cashmore, of the RUC drugs squad, attributes much of this to the fact that his division has increased by 50 per cent in strength this year, a dividend of the ceasefires, with 120 officers concerned with drugs full-time throughout Northern Ireland. In his view both sets of paramilitaries are involved in the drugs trade. "The loyalists tend to be more hands-on while the republicans go in for franchising and licensing of the selling." His chief, Detective Superintendent Kevin Sheehy, went further yesterday than any senior RUC officer has been prepared to go when he said that Direct Action Against Drugs could not be separated from the IRA. Nobody ever seriously doubted that view. The paramilitaries have occasionally issued threats of direct action against drug dealers, which they claim is popular in communities which suffer the most from the consequences of the dealers' activities. But Sinn Fein's rationalisation of the situation — blaming these "strategic" kill-

ings on the lack of an acceptable police force — is scarcely endorsed on the streets. People want the drugs pushers off their backs, but they want them dealt with by due process of law, not from the barrel of a gun. The sheer rapidity of the slayings also undermines the basis of justification. A number of explanations offer themselves. The first is that the republican leadership is coming under pressure from its hardliners, who see no benefits from the ceasefire and are itching to reassert a militant agenda. In this scenario the Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams, is losing his grip on the IRA — a point made by the Catholic primate Cardinal Daly — because of the lack of political progress. The mirror-image of this argument, however, is theoretically just as valid; that such shootings actually strengthen the position of the republican movement's "moderates" because they provide work for the idle hands of bored IRA volunteers and give the impression that a return to the war is imminent. If anything, this scenario is the more plausible, since the IRA leadership has recently demonstrated that in spite of frequent speculative stories that it is under pressure from the grassroots to abandon the ceasefire, it is very capable of maintaining discipline and control. During the visit of

President Clinton there was not a single so-called punishment beating. In a record year for such attacks, when loyalists carried out 87 and republicans 175. The dimension which the Mitchell Commission into paramilitary arms has introduced into the peace process also raises some intriguing questions. Could the IRA be engaged in a

final round of settling old scores and stamping its authority on the Catholic community before the "three wise men" make recommendations for advancing the situation? Senator Mitchell, Dublin fervently hopes, is hardly likely to endorse Mr Major's demand for a token handover of IRA weaponry, but he might suggest other ways of proving the republicans' commitment to democratic methods, such as the ending of shootings and beatings. While resisting demands for an IRA "surrender," Sinn Fein would find such proposals difficult to turn down. The inevitable problem for the IRA is that every new initiative divests it of a role and brings a step nearer Unionist demands for its total disarmament.

Sainsbury's cuts 'fall short of price war'

Roger Cowe

SAINSBURY'S launched a price promotion campaign yesterday, backed by heavy advertising. But while the move was seen in some quarters as the first step by the company's new marketing director, Kevin McCarten, to restore its fortunes after a year of falling sales, it was dismissed by rivals and industry analysts. Tesco described the campaign as a repackaging exercise. "They have just put all their price and manufacturers' promotions together and given it a name," a spokesman said. Asda said Sainsbury's campaign was a short-term gimmick. Sainsbury's has seen sales

suffer as shoppers have concentrated on low prices, and rivals have matched the chain's traditional strengths in quality and own-label products. Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda and Waitrose have all improved in the past couple of years, tempting away traditional Sainsbury's shoppers. Discounts and special offers will be labelled "Sainsbury's January Savers". The campaign will cover at least 100 lines at a time and will affect the price of more than 300 products during the month. Some products will be half-price. Other offers include a free pack of sliced bread, jam, Battenburg cake or Novon soap powder for each pack purchased. Sainsbury's claims shoppers can save nearly 30 per cent on the

range of promoted products, saving almost £20 on a £70 shopping basket. In the City, Sainsbury's share price fell by 3p, along with that of other supermarket groups. But analysts poured cold water on City fears of a price war, as happened two years ago. The campaign is seen as a tactical skirmish aimed at promoting a low-price image rather than the first strike in a price war. One analyst predicted that the IRA leadership has recently demonstrated that in spite of frequent speculative stories that it is under pressure from the grassroots to abandon the ceasefire, it is very capable of maintaining discipline and control. During the visit of

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Cure claim for Gulf war syndrome

Maggie O'Kane

A LEADING United States Aids expert will tell a gathering of scientists in London today that he has found the cause and a potential treatment for Gulf war syndrome, a debilitating condition with multiple symptoms that 4,000 British veterans claim they contracted during the military campaign against Saddam Hussein.

Howard Urnovitz, whose research partners include the pioneering French Aids scientist Luc Montagnier, says the syndrome can be successfully treated with an antibiotic called doxycycline, which attacks the cocktail of viruses that many experts say has led to the illness.

Almost 500 British Gulf war veterans are seeking compensation from the Government in the courts. The claim that Dr Urnovitz has found a treatment follows a pilot treatment programme on six veterans. All six, he says, showed dramatic improvements within weeks. "I call a man getting out of his wheelchair and walking dramatic," Dr Urnovitz said yesterday.

The medical board of California's Veterans' Association hospital has agreed to allow Dr Urnovitz to carry out further test on 500 veterans in a programme beginning on February 1. Sergeant Tom Hare, who lives in Orange, Houston, was in a wheelchair when his wife Christine heard Dr Urnovitz speaking on television. She contacted him: "When we met Howard, I was dressing my husband because he was too weak — his legs were collapsing. He could no longer hold himself up. He was waking up screaming in pain. Our Veterans' Hospital in Houston, Texas, told him it was all in his mind. He started to take the doxycycline antibiotic, and within a month he was out of the wheelchair. His hair stopped falling out and he was able to work."

Sgt Hare said: "We hooked up with Howard and I've just got better and better. We were at the end of the rope." Debbie Judd, who worked as a nurse in the Gulf war, has been ill for the past five years. She started the treatment nine weeks ago. "It made a significant difference, took away joint and muscle

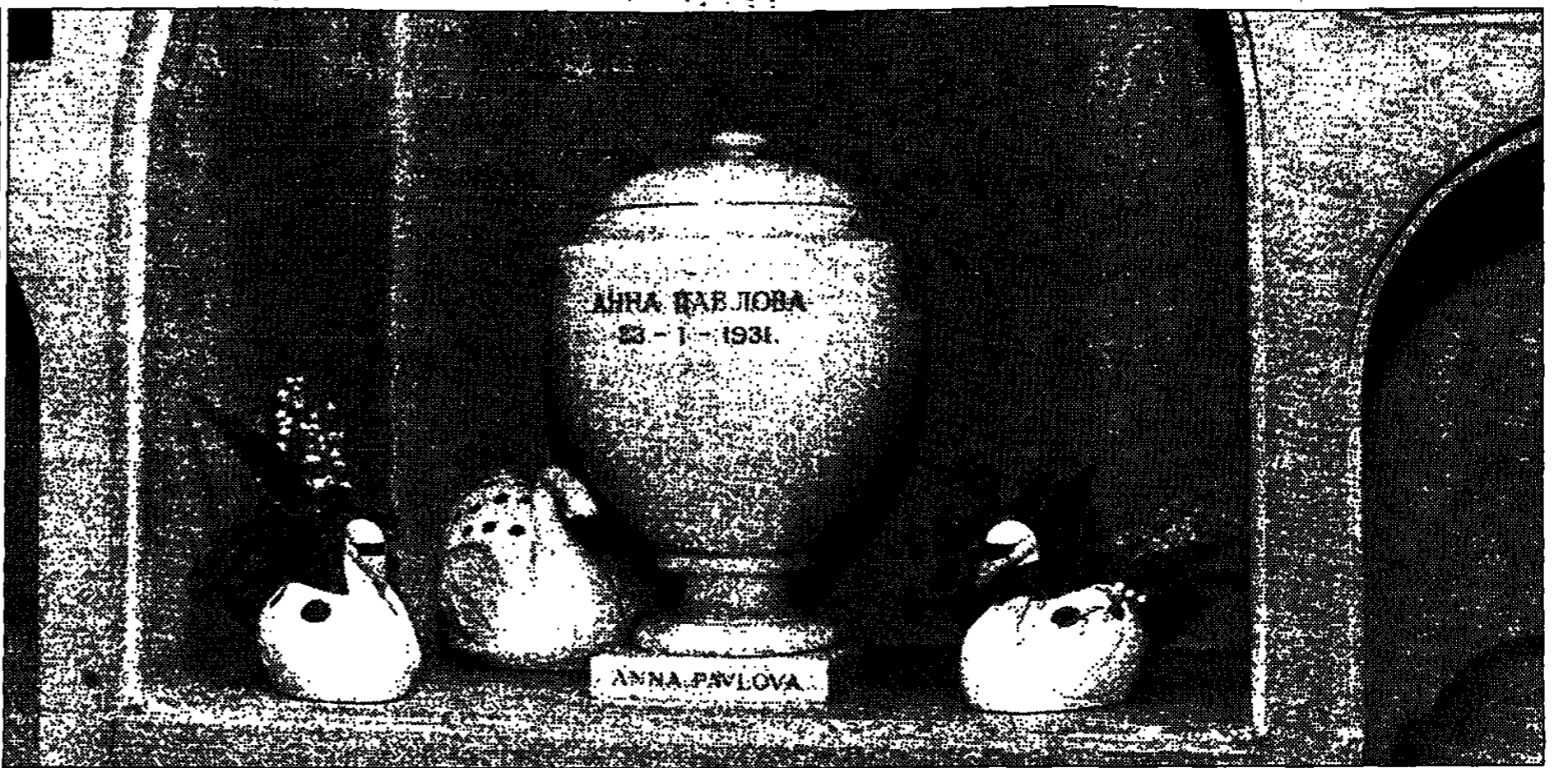
pain, and there was a general overall improvement. I've got a lot of faith in Dr Urnovitz. I think he's a genius," she said. Ms Judd, like Sgt Hare, believes she was exposed to chemical attacks in the Gulf. Dr Urnovitz believes it was exposure to chemical weapons that shattered the immune system of the veterans. Already weakened by the vaccination they were given and the harsh conditions in the Gulf.

There has been controversy in Britain about the existence and causes of Gulf war syndrome. The Ministry of Defence, which was criticised by the defence select committee for its dismissive attitude towards the syndrome — has insisted allied troops did not come under chemical attack. Dr Urnovitz's research over two years shows that the syndrome has in many cases been passed on to partners, and has caused genetic defects. "Like rubella, it is being passed on as a virus and can, we believe, explain the birth defects in children of the veterans," he said.

Last year Ms Judd presented a report to a US congressional research committee based on a four-year survey of relatives of 10,051 Gulf war veterans. She found that 51 per cent of the partners and 21 per cent of the children of veterans said they had experienced health problems. In Britain, at a meeting last October of the organisation Gulf Veterans And Their Families, 20 women said they had contracted the same illnesses as their husbands.

The collapse of the immune system is brought about when "a switch is flicked in the body", according to Dr Urnovitz. The body is then open to "opportunistic infections". A US researcher, James Tuttle, who has led two Senate investigations into the syndrome, yesterday urged caution about Dr Urnovitz's claims. "There's no doubt this treatment is working, but the problem is that viruses can develop an immunity to some antibiotics like doxycycline, and if they stop taking them then the disease can come back. But there is no doubt that this treatment can at least arrest the progress of the disease."

Maggie O'Kane's documentary on the Gulf war will be shown tonight at 9 pm on Channel 4.



The remains of Anna Pavlova at Golders Green crematorium. A new book suggests her last wish was for her ashes to be returned to Russia

PHOTOGRAPH BY E. HAMILTON WEST

'It was the last wish of Anna Pavlova that she should return to her homeland'

Sally Weale

THE ashes of Anna Pavlova, the legendary Russian ballerina, which have lain in a marble urn at Golders Green crematorium for more than half a century, are at the centre of a fresh controversy following the publication of a new book. For years the dancer, who immortalised Saint-Saens's dying swan in 4,000 performances, has been one of the star attractions at the north London crematorium, which also boasts the remains of Sigmund Freud, H.G. Wells, and Gustav Holst.

Now, according to evidence uncovered in a new book entitled *Anna Pavlova: The Triumph and Tragedy of a Mestastar*, published in Amsterdam last month, it appears she is being kept in Golders Green against her will. The Dutchman Jean Thomassen, a balletomane and author of the book, claims to have found conclusive evidence from previously unseen archives that Pavlova's dying wish was that her remains should be returned to her beloved Russia after the fall of the Communist regime. Pavlova, whose haunting performances were an inspiration to all who saw her dance, died at the age of 50 in a hotel room in the Hague on January 23, 1931.

In the absence of a will, a court ruled that her business manager and putative husband, Victor Dandré, should be the executor of her estate. He died in 1944, and his will

remained at Golders Green in perpetuity. Mr Thomassen, who has led a campaign to have the ballerina's remains repatriated, is challenging Dandré's legacy because he says the couple were never married. "Dandré was a mafia gangster, a crook and villain. His ashes lie under Anna's at the crematorium in Golders Green but they should be thrown in the bin," Mr Thomassen said yesterday. "Golders Green don't like the idea of losing the ashes of Anna Pavlova," he said. "They are very proud of them. Her's is one of the most famous urns in the country. "But I have proved it was the last wish of Anna Pavlova that she should return to her homeland. "I think it is a shame that a person who did so much for her fellow men cannot have such a simple wish granted. Mr Thomassen's book also claims to identify for the first time the illegitimate Pavlova's father as a wealthy Jewish banker from St Petersburg. And it further explodes the myth of Pavlova's last words: "Prepare my swan costume". Mr Thomassen says: "In fact Pavlova asked her private maid Marguerite to bring her the designer dress she recently bought in Paris and send it back for a refund so she could use the money for one of her orphanages."



Pavlova... haunting performances were inspirational

Rushdie beats Booker winner to Whitbread award

Michael Ellison Arts Correspondent

SALMAN RUSHDIE, the world's most threatened writer, receives consolation today for his failure to win last year's Booker prize. Mr Rushdie, who has lived under an Iranian death threat for almost seven years, won a place on the shortlist for the £21,000 Whitbread Book of the Year for his novel *The Moor's Last Sigh*.

Among those he defeated to gain the Whitbread novel award was Pat Barker, who took the Booker with *The Ghost Road* when Mr Rushdie was the hottest favourite in the history of the £20,000 prize. Mr Rushdie, aged 46, said last night: "It's always nice to receive recognition for a book. They take a long time to write and it's good to feel that people respond well to them."

The *Moor's Last Sigh* has sold 120,000 hardback copies in the United Kingdom and Australia in just under four months — better than any of his books apart from *The Satanic Verses*, the work that put his life in danger and was shortlisted for the Whitbread in 1988. Mr Rushdie won the Booker prize in 1981 for *Midnight's Children*, which also won the Booker of Bookers, celebrating 25 years of the award, two years ago. "I'm not so blasé that I don't get excited by an



Rushdie: 'I'm not blasé; I'll take any prizes I can get'

award. It's a simple moment of pleasure to get patted on the back. I'll take any prizes I can get, thank you," Mr Rushdie said. He was thinking about a new book. "I've got an idea that's half-formed but it's a little gleam in the eye at the moment." Since failing to win last year's Booker, Mr Rushdie has been in a car crash south of Sydney, Australia, and incarcerated in a hotel room in Santiago by Chilean authorities who feared for his safety. He is certain to be favourite for the prize, which will be awarded later this month. The other four winners on the shortlist, each of whom receives £2,000, are: first novel, Kate Atkinson for *Behind The Scenes At The Museum*; children's novel, Michael Morpurgo for *The Wreck Of The Zanzibar*; biography, Roy Jenkins for *Gladstone*; poetry, Bernard O'Donoghue for *Gunpowder*.

Anything goes, abuse-wise, on Capitol Hill

Jonathan Freedland in Washington

AS BRITISH parliamentarians mourn the coarsening of current political discourse, their US counterparts are plunging headlong into a yah-booo politics of their own. Decorum in House Debate, an internal review just published in Washington, has revealed that the US House of Representatives is often an even ruder and rowdier place than its ancestor in Westminster.

The Congressional Research Service blamed unprecedented "partisan tenor" for a slide in standards throughout 1995, with foul language and even the odd brawl in the chamber. Defying those US admirers who regularly tune in to Prime Minister's Questions on cable TV — believing that the British Parliament has the monopoly on choice insults — the report features a catalogue of unparliamentary conduct on Capitol Hill. During last month's debate over the deployment of US troops into Bosnia, Republican Randy Cunningham questioned the credibility of Democrat James Moran, alleging he had "turned his back on Desert Storm." That remark was too much for the Democrat, who showed Mr Cunningham in the back on the way out of the chamber — provoking a virtual punch-up involving half a dozen members. Fists flew again when the curmudgeonly Florida Demo-

crat Sam Gibbons stormed out of a meeting of the pivotal Ways and Means committee, calling Republican members "a bunch of fascists." The remark triggered the now famous brawl in the hall, with Mr Gibbons grabbing and pulling the tie of Republican Bill Thomas. Mr Thomas had his revenge later, when he took his turn in the Speaker's chair. Incensed by Democratic intransigence, he silenced the opposition by shutting off the House microphones. When several Democrats suggested they might take a break to eat, Mr Thomas closed all the House restaurants. Republican John Mica wins star billing in the report's verbal abuse category, describing President Clinton as a "little bugger". Mr Mica's colleague and outside presidential candidate Robert Dornan, known as B-2 Bob for his bomb-throwing attacks on Democrats, was removed from the House floor for railing against Mr Clinton's 1990s opposition to the Vietnam war, which culminated in his calling the commander-in-chief a "traitor." Democrats shot back, defaming their favourite bogeyman, House Speaker Newt Gingrich. In November they were forced to withdraw blown-up copies of a tabloid newspaper cartoon depicting Mr Gingrich as a sobbing baby, complete with nappy and dummy. A long debate ensued over whether the terms "cry baby" and "temper tantrum" constituted legitimate parliamentary language.

D'Oliveira had not set foot on this ground for 37 years, two years before Arlott found him a cricket club in Lancashire where he could be treated like a human being. And he had certainly never been in any presidential lunch rooms: he was confined to the old grass bank reserved for non-whites.
Matthew Engel

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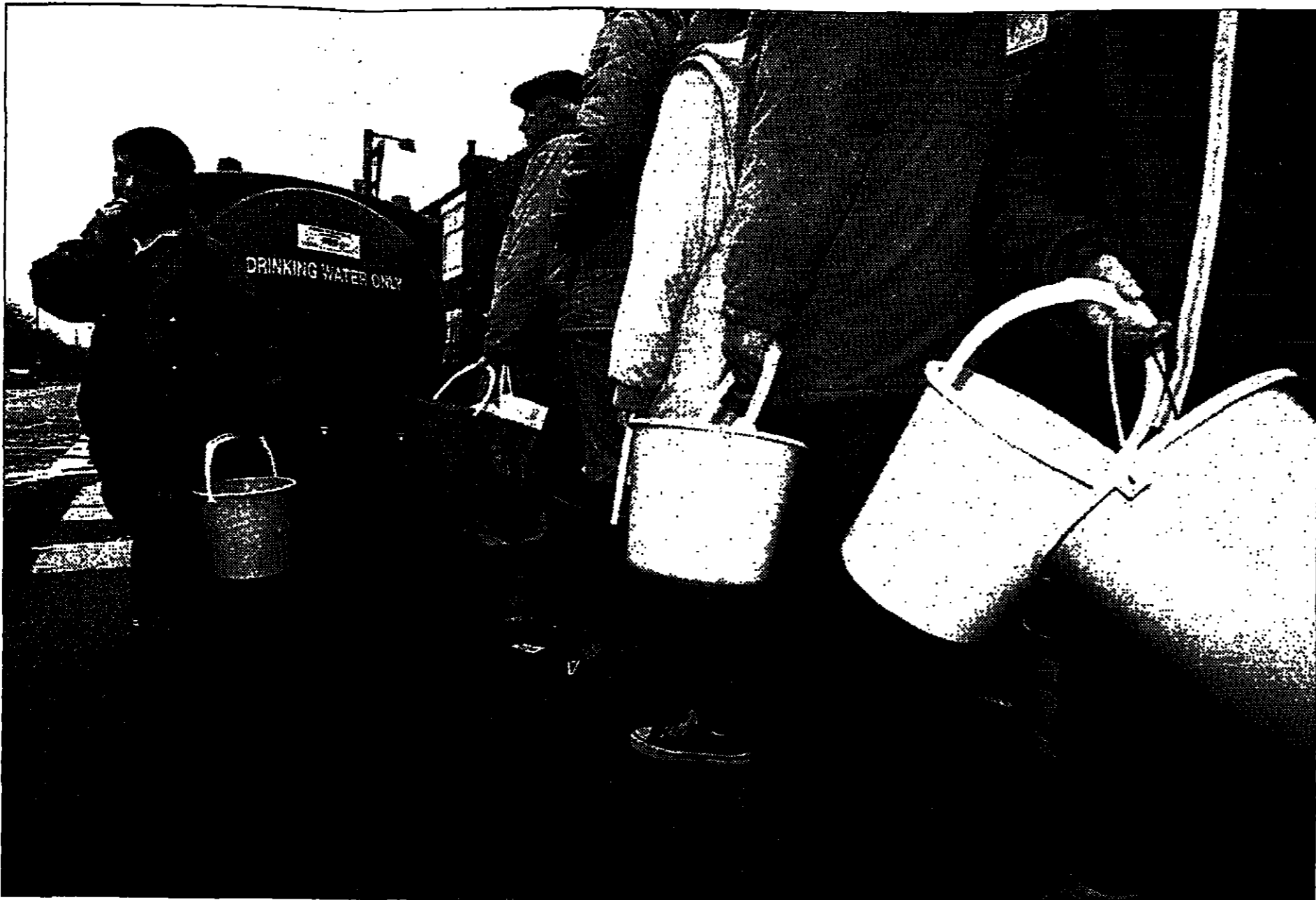
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Trouble brewing... Burst-blighted residents of Ashington, Northumberland, queuing for water from a tanker yesterday in an area with 'critical' problems. PHOTOGRAPH: OWEN HUMPHREYS

MP demands inquiry into water crisis

David Ward

WATER companies yesterday warned of a growing supply crisis, as millions of gallons continued to be lost from pipes fractured during the big thaw.

In Northumberland and Tyneside, Strathclyde, Northern Ireland and parts of Leeds and Greater Manchester, tankers took water to thousands of consumers, while other users — particularly those living on high ground — suffered severe falls in water pressure. Companies said new leaks were appearing as fast as they repaired burst mains. They had been powerless to deal with those in factories, offices and schools shut over the holiday.

John Cuthbert, managing director of North West Water, said: "The situation is now critical. We are putting as much water as possible into the system but until we get on top of our bursts and customers get on top of theirs, we are still losing water."

Problems were worst in Strathclyde, where 500,000 customers were without water, and in the North-east of England where Northumbria Water estimated it was losing 18 million gallons a day, with 250,000 customers cut off from mains supplies.

Andrew Panting, Northumbria's head of public relations, described the situation as "pretty critical", and said bursts had caused an unprecedented drain on supplies. "Some areas have been without water for a couple of days and others are at risk of losing their water as demand increases. We have plenty of water but we cannot get it treated and supplied quick enough to satisfy demand."

Because of shortages in the Ashington area, Northumberland Fire and Rescue has brought in a 5,000-gallon bowser and two 300-gallon appliances in case of a big fire.

North West Water is struggling to keep reservoirs filled. "We have the water but these local reservoirs are being drained faster than we can fill them," said a spokesman. "Our managers say they have never seen anything quite like this before."

A Strathclyde council spokesman said: "We are running very fast just to stand still." Yesterday the council called in eight tankers and 200 smaller vehicles to take water to collection points in stricken areas, to which householders were asked to take their own containers. In parts of Ayrshire and Argyle, people were urged to boil drinking water as some untreated water was put into the supply in order to avoid cutting off more areas.

Yorkshire Water reported that about 6,000 customers in Leeds had suffered cuts in supplies. "We are putting more water into the system and boosting pumps. But bursts are still occurring," said a spokesman.

Chris Mullin, Labour MP for Sunderland South, has urged John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, to order an independent inquiry into water supplies. He said it was needed to establish what provision water companies had made for such emergencies and if resources for coping with them had been increased or cut since privatisation.

British Gas has admitted that due to the severity of recent weather it was unable to fulfil its commitment to thousands of its three-star service customers, who were left without heating for several days although it promised them an engineer would be sent within 24 hours of a fault being reported. A spokesman said: "We have to hold up our hands. In some areas we were caught out over Christmas. We will consider every case for compensation on its merits."

Howard told of 'lethal' visa ban

Suzanne Goldenberg in New Delhi

SOUTH Asian human rights groups have appealed to Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, to reconsider banning Indian asylum seekers from Britain, saying deportees face arrest and torture on their return.

Ravi Nair, director of the South Asian Human Rights Documentation Centre, said all returnees may face police harassment and extortion, but those with political involvement — especially Sikhs — could face death.

"If the deportees have genuine political connections with the Sikh armed opposition or their sympathisers, torture, arrest and detention would be the least he or she would face," Mr Nair said in his letter to Mr Howard.

The Home Secretary started the first day of a tour of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh in Bombay yesterday, with a visit to the Salvation Army headquarters and Asha Dhan, a Mother Theresa home. He also sat in on two visa interviews at the consulate.

Human rights activists and lawyers in Punjab, where Sikh militants are fighting for a separate state, say any migrant who is forcibly returned comes under suspicion by the authorities.

"The chances are at least 70 per cent he will end up dead," said Rupinder Singh Sodhi, a lawyer at Delhi's supreme court. "The moment a person is deported and lands at Delhi airport we move the court immediately to ensure his safety. If the court drags its feet then the man is dead."

Ranjana Lakhanpal, a lawyer at the Punjab high court in Chandigarh, added: "If their parents or relatives can pay money to police people then they are released. If they can't pay then they are killed."

Activists say a ban on asylum seekers could be lethal, and western countries should make public the names of deportees and monitor their fate after their return to India.

However, Mr Howard yesterday denied that the revised immigration laws were aimed at Indians. "Our laws are colour blind," he said.

Dorrell puts social services under review

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

A REVIEW of social services spending ordered by ministers yesterday will prove that local authorities are underfunded for their growing duties, social services directors believe.

Private care providers are calling for the review to consider stripping local authorities of responsibility for direct care, leaving them instead to be purchasers of services from other bodies.

The review was announced by Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, to mark the 25th anniversary of the modern social services departments. Research cited by the minister has suggested there was a 10 per cent fall in the efficiency of social services during the 1980s.

Tad Kubisa, president of the Association of Directors of Social Services, said the review would show that an ageing population and the withdrawal of the health service from long-term care had added substantially to the social service workload.

Mr Barlow said that because of this his client could answer no questions about the incident or his feelings towards Derbyshire police and their treatment of him.

The decision for the CPS will be whether Mr Baungartner used reasonable force to defend his property.

Ingham was found dead on the driveway of Mr Baungartner's home in Ockbrook, Derby, on Saturday afternoon.

CPS to rule on action over burglar killed in struggle

Sarah Boseley

A MAN whose struggle with a burglar at his home resulted in the death of the intruder, wept yesterday over the experience which he said he feared would change his life.

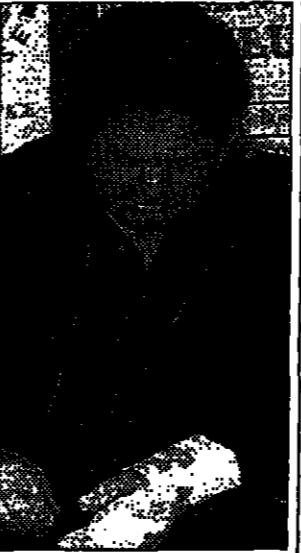
Asked what effect the death of Robert Ingham, aged 22, would have on him, Niklos Baungartner, aged 53, said: "I will never be a man again."

Derbyshire police released Mr Baungartner after questioning, but a spokeswoman said yesterday the file would be sent to the Crown Prosecution Service, which is usual in cases of death from unnatural causes.

Mr Baungartner said that because of this his client could answer no questions about the incident or his feelings towards Derbyshire police and their treatment of him.

The decision for the CPS will be whether Mr Baungartner used reasonable force to defend his property.

Ingham was found dead on the driveway of Mr Baungartner's home in Ockbrook, Derby, on Saturday afternoon.



Niklos Baungartner... wept over death of burglar

burgled the house. As a result the man... has died and police inquiries have ensued.

Mr Baungartner was treated in hospital for injuries suffered in the struggle. Mr Barlow said his client had gone through a terrifying ordeal.

He suffered a broken wrist and a black eye in the struggle. No weapons were involved in the fight, which began in the house and spilled out into the garden.

Mr Baungartner went to a neighbour for help. When police arrived, Mr Ingham, aged 22, was dead, with a broken neck.

The Home Secretary, Michael Howard, said recently at the Police Superintendents' Association conference that those who used force to defend themselves should be treated more sympathetically within the criminal justice system.

Mr Baungartner is believed to have moved to Britain from Hungary in the 1980s and to have built up a prosperous business. He has lived in the village of Ockbrook for 15 years.

News in brief

Description of Bristol killing suspect issued

POLICE hunting the killers of Evon Berry, aged 37, the Bristol caretaker killed when he tried to stop a street robbery on New Year's Day, have issued a description of the man thought to have shot him.

Mr Berry was killed by a single shot to the head after he and two friends saw four men attacking another man in the St Paul's area of the city. The gang drove off after the shooting.

Avon and Somerset police said yesterday one of the four men involved in the attack was seen brandishing a gun, believed to be a .32 calibre pistol. He was described as in his early 20s, of mixed race, 5ft 10in tall and slim with short black hair. He was wearing a blue denim shirt and trousers and white training shoes.

A police spokesman said four or five shots were fired during the incident in which Mr Berry's friends — brothers in their 30s — were injured. One of the injured men remained under armed guard in a Bristol hospital yesterday with a gunshot wound to his side. The other, who suffered head injuries after being pistol-whipped, has been discharged. — *Geoffrey Gibbs*

Boys dies of meningitis

A TWO-year-old boy died of suspected meningitis and three other boys are believed to be suffering from the disease, it was revealed yesterday.

The boy who died became ill at home in Huyton, Merseyside, on Thursday. His parents took him to Whiston hospital that night when he developed red blotches on his stomach. He died at 1.30am on Friday. Two three-year-old boys were improving at the hospital yesterday and an 11-year-old boy has been transferred to Alder Hey children's hospital, Liverpool.

A spokeswoman for Whiston hospital said the Public Health Laboratories had been alerted and found no evidence of a connection between the cases. "They all came from different areas and the number of cases is not considered unusual for the time of year," she added.

Hospital rejects donation

A RAUNCHY dance troupe which raised almost £500 for one of the world's most famous children's hospitals has been told its donation is not wanted. The five friends, who perform in leotards, stockings and suspenders, gave a charity performance at their local pub for Great Ormond Street hospital, where one has a son under constant treatment.

But fund raisers at the hospital have refused the cash on the grounds the group — Fan Attack — was too raucy. The dancers who had spent 10 weeks rehearsing for the performance, received a letter on the day they were due to perform, dissociating the hospital from the event.

The dance organisers said the cash would be donated to a special school for disabled children. A spokeswoman for Great Ormond Street said the hospital believed the women were going to do an "erotic" dance in a packed pub. While donations were welcomed, this hospital did not want its name linked with the performance.

Deportation ad attacked

THE Nigerian High Commission in London came under fire from anti-deportation campaigners over an advertisement which appeared in yesterday's Guardian aimed at discrediting Nigerians seeking asylum in Britain.

"The Nigerian government seems to believe that an unlimited budget can be used to legitimise the unjustifiable... In recent months the whole world has seen the true nature of the brutal regime which imposes its will on that country," the Onibiyi Family Anti-Deportation Campaign said yesterday.

The ad drew attention to the case of Ade Onibiyi, aged 20, a Nigerian asylum seeker who was given a temporary stay of deportation last month and whose case is going for judicial review.

Mr Onibiyi says his father Abdul was a pro-democracy activist who has not been heard of since he was deported to Nigeria in October. In the ad, the High Commission denies he has been held by the country's security services. It accused the campaign of damaging the image of the country. — *Gary Young*

JCB driver banned

A MAN who went shopping driving a JCB digger while he was banned from driving was jailed for five months yesterday.

Andrew Morris, aged 27, an unemployed construction worker, parked the digger in a disabled vehicle zone at an Asda store in Wakefield, West Yorkshire. He went inside to do some shopping, leaving the JCB blocking cars outside, magistrates at Morley, near Leeds, were told.

Morris, of Bealey Drive, Ossett, West Yorkshire, was banned from driving at the time but said he did not know the ban included diggers. He admitted driving while disqualified and was banned for a further year and jailed for five months.

Phillip Howell, defending, told the court that Morris, who bought the digger for £5,000 two weeks earlier, had no idea his driving ban extended to all vehicles. Morris also pleaded guilty to driving without insurance and admitted two other charges of driving a car while disqualified.

High street passports

TRAVELLERS can apply for passports through high street post offices and travel agents, under Home Office rules that came into force yesterday.

The UK Passport Agency has teamed up with the Post Office and Artac World Choice travel agents — which represents 500 independent travel agents throughout the UK — by opening 2,000 extra outlets for passports. It will still be possible to apply under existing arrangements.

Turnaround times for applications have dropped from a maximum 95 working days in 1989 to 16 in 1994. The target for 1996 is an average seven days. — *Rebecca Smithers*

Guardian critic's prize

JAMES Hall, the Guardian's art critic, has won the first Bernard Devoir memorial prize. It goes to the writer judged the outstanding young art critic by the British section of the International Association of Art Critics. Mr Devoir was a former chairman.

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سكايفان الادبيل

Arthritis doctors take a step forward

Chris Mihill on a medical advance

NEARLY all arthritis patients can be helped with drugs, painkillers or exercise therapy to control their symptoms and a few can be completely cured, researchers said yesterday.

Increasing surgical skills and knowledge meant more joints could be replaced, but the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council hopes new chemical and genetic interventions could prevent the need for surgery.

A report from the council to mark the charity's 60th year strikes an upbeat note about progress against the illness. But specialists cautioned that much remained to be done, and that an increasing elderly population meant a growing burden of pain and disability for which insufficient health service money was being provided.

Paul Dieppe, ARC professor of rheumatology at Bristol university and author of the report, said that 10 per cent of the British population was affected by arthritis, but treatment was improving and a growing scientific understanding of what caused the condition was opening up the possibility of new therapies.

"There are 200 forms of arthritis, but for some forms people can be completely cured. Gout is now effectively curable in nearly every case. It is fair to say that nearly everyone else can be helped greatly by drugs which suppress the disease and therapies to protect joints and keep muscles strong. We are able to achieve good control of symptoms in 50 to 60 per cent of cases, and we can cure perhaps 10 to 20 per cent."



Arthritis victim Jasmine Gardner, 22 months, who helped launch the council's anniversary celebrations with actor Andrew Sachs. PHOTOGRAPH GARRY WEASER

Professor Dieppe told a press conference in London that it was now possible to replace most of the major joints in the body, although with varying degrees of success, but it would be a long time before a neck replacement was possible. Hips had turned out to be the easiest of the joints to replace, but knees, elbows, and finger

joints were regularly replaced, and occasionally shoulders, ankles and toes. Some 50,000 hips and 40,000 knees are replaced each year in Britain.

Professor Dieppe said there was continuing excitement that treatments to interfere with the chemical messengers which go into overdrive to damage joints were living up to their early promise. "We

want to put joint replacement surgeons out of business. We want to get to a position whereby joints don't get smashed up, so there is no need for a replacement."

Pat Froomberg, who holds the record for the person in Britain who has had the most joint replacement operations — eight in all — said that the technology, together with drugs to keep her symptoms

Police hail drink-drive success

Duncan Campbell Crime Correspondent

THE number of positive breath tests over the Christmas and New Year period fell by 8 per cent, according to figures published yesterday.

The results were hailed as a success for the seasonal anti-drink drive campaign, and as a sign of the continuing change in attitudes towards drinking and driving.

Positive tests in England and Wales totalled 4,330, compared with 4,706 over the same period last year, according to figures announced by the Association of Chief Police Officers.

But the number of tests carried out by individual forces varied between the two years. In Cleveland, there were 1,080 tests, of which 30 were positive, against 1,475 last year with 53 positive.

David Williams, chief constable of Surrey and the chairman of the ACPO's traffic committee, welcomed the drop but said there was no room for complacency.

"While the overall reduction should be welcomed, it must be treated with a degree of caution, given that 22 per cent of those who gave positive tests had been involved in an accident," said Mr Williams.

"In all there were 839 alcohol-related accidents," he added. "This cannot be acceptable."

Edmund King, head of campaigns for the Royal Automobile Association, said: "Despite the vocal criticisms of

some groups at the launch of the Government's Christmas drink-drive campaign, it has proved to be a great success. Comments that new government guidelines on safe drinking would give out the wrong message have proved to be unfounded."

Andrew Howard, head of road safety at the Automobile Association, said: "For the fourth year running, the number of positive breath tests over the festive season has come down, proving that the 'don't drink and drive' message is finally getting through."

"Britain's drink-drive problem is caused by a small minority of motorists who continue to ignore the legal limit and deliberately flout the law. It is these persistent offenders who need to be targeted, and the Government must keep the pressure on if drinking and driving is to be reduced even further," said Mr Howard.

Despite the fall nationally, there was a big rise in the South-west.

"It does appear there have been people who have decided to take the chance, with the incidents occurring very close to people's homes," said Devon and Cornwall's deputy chief constable, John Albon.

"It could well be that the cold weather has made them use the car more often than they might for these short journeys. There is a trend for people to be involved to be middle-aged and middle income, there is no tearaway problem here."

Government must face Iraq arms 'nightmare'

Richard Norton-Taylor on an embarrassing time for ministers and mandarins when the Scott report is finally published



Teddy Taylor... 'I would chuck them in the Thames'

THE Government would not be able to dismiss the "nightmare" of the forthcoming Scott report on arms sales to Iraq, and must fully accept its conclusions, a Tory MP said yesterday.

The warning from Sir Teddy Taylor, the Euro-sceptic and independent-minded MP for Southend East, came as ministers prepare a damage limitation exercise to counter the devastating criticisms in the judge's report, almost certainly to be published next month.

Sir Teddy told BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "The Scott inquiry will be a real nightmare because we all know it's going to say some pretty horrible things. The crucial thing is that if he says something harsh and nasty, we have got to accept it."

"If Scott says Mr A and Mr B made an error of judgment, and a serious error of judgment, I would chuck them in the Thames as quickly as possible," Sir Teddy said.

Dismissive comments about Sir Richard Scott's inquiry doing the rounds in Westminster and Whitehall betray deep anxiety as senior civil servants and ministers brace themselves for his report. Beneath its carefree veneer, Whitehall is aware it will wreck reputations, and more important in the long run, shake up Britain's entire machinery of government.

Leaked extracts of Sir Richard's draft report accused William Waldegrave, Chief Secretary to the Treasury and

Although the judge may tone down his criticisms, it is believed Mr Waldegrave has not been cleared. Mr Clark and Lord Trevarne will also be criticised. John Major is likely to be given the benefit of the doubt.

Although Mr Major failed to give an accurate account to Parliament about policy towards Iraq, Sir Richard is expected to conclude that he believed his statements to MPs were accurate.

His finger will point to officials in the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Department of Trade and Industry, as well as junior ministers, for advising their political masters publicly to maintain the fiction that the Government's policy on arms sales to Iraq had not changed.

Tory MPs seem to be more concerned about the prosecution of three directors of the Matrix Churchill machine tool firm charged with evading export controls. The case against them collapsed after the trial judge overturned Public Interest Immunity certificates designed to prevent crucial evidence of government connivance in the trade.

The four ministers who signed the certificates will escape blame, but Sir Nicholas Lyell, the Attorney General, will be criticised for his handling of the prosecution.

So too, will officials across Whitehall who interfered in prosecution witness statements and persuaded DTI officials to give misleading evidence.

Sir Richard heard from 270 witnesses, either verbally or in writing, and was supplied by Whitehall with over 150,000 pages of documents. The Government will contest vigorously that Scott has interpreted the evidence fairly," says a senior Whitehall official. Sir Richard may think the true judge of that should be Parliament and the public.

Firm's £70m deal to run written driving test

DETAILS of the written theory test for learner drivers were released yesterday as a £70 million contract was awarded to run the scheme.

The Driving Standards Authority announced that a newly formed company, DriveSafe Ltd, had won the five-year contract for the written part of the driving test, which learners will have to sit from July 1 this year as well being

examined on their practical skills.

They will have to answer 35 questions based on the Highway Code and road safety matters and picked from a bank of about 600 questions.

It is still to be decided how many they will have to get right. There will be four types of theory test for learners: one each for motorcycle, car, lorry and bus and coach drivers.

The written test will last about 40 minutes and cover up to 12 topics, including driver attitude, traffic signs, the effects of alcohol, drugs and fatigue and environmental aspects of vehicles.

The fee for this test is expected to be £13 to £15.

After the first six months of its operation, learners will have to pass the written test before being allowed to take the road test.



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One of the most recent serial killers, Colin Ireland was so interested in the notion of such killing that he consulted Newsweek to find out how many he had to kill — four as it turned out.

Duncan Campbell

G2 cover story

Burundi 'on the brink of collapse'

Chris McGreal in Johannesburg

BURUNDI'S president, Sylvestre Ntibunganya, has blamed saboteurs within the government and army extremists for dragging the country to the brink of total collapse through civil war and ethnic cleansing.

particularly to the paralysing approach of confrontation and destruction. It is by this path that peace can be attained.

Civil war claims more than 1,000 lives a month, says Amnesty

will fall under the dictatorship of extremists and the perpetrators of genocide," he said.

Poor stay cold in Kobe's ashes

Kevin Rafferty on the plight of those who suffered most in last year's quake

SUPERFICIALLY Kobe is back on its feet again, almost a year after the earthquake which smashed the world's fifth biggest port and set off fires that burned its poorer areas to ashes.

their last journey — mixed up with shoes, shirts and toys which somehow escaped the fire.

Most of it is still bare, but a couple of solid new houses have been built by rich people. Red pegs mark out plots, and one family has left its dog chained to its kennel to ward off intruders.

Hong Kong police believe extradition of an ex-employee from US would help smash smuggling ring

BAT plots China offensive

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong and Leonard Doyle

SENIOR executives of the cigarette multinational British-American Tobacco will gather in Hong Kong today to plot Project Battalion, the code-name for a new corporate strategy targeted at China and other emerging markets.

ers, particularly the 450 million in China, to BAT's earnings.

through which its own and other foreign cigarettes flow in abundance into China once they have passed out of the cigarette companies' hands.

ordinate promotion and sales of global brands such as State Express 555, Mao Zedong's favourite cigarette and now popular with millions of Chinese, BAT Industries has embarked on a large-scale reorganisation of its tobacco business. Starting this month, a new company, British-

health concerns that have dented profits in the West.

1991 to 1993. He was taken into custody at Boston airport after a joint operation by the FBI and Hong Kong's ICAC.

Contraband cigarette sales in Beijing provide a big proportion of world profits

mer BAT executives in Hong Kong took bribes from a smuggling syndicate.

News in brief

Youths held 'illegally'
PALESTINIAN youths are being held with adults in Israeli military jails in violation of international laws stipulating separate accommodation, a children's rights group said yesterday.

Monarchs hit by heavy snow

HEAVY snows in the main sanctuaries of the monarch butterfly in central Mexico have killed millions of the distinctive orange and black insects.

Opium warlord's highland den falls to Burmese army assault

Nick Cumming-Bruce in Bangkok

OPIUM warlord Khun Sa's standing as the kingpin of Burma's mountainous north-eastern drug belt suffered a heavy blow as his headquarters on the border with Thailand fell to Burmese troops without resistance.

nic minorities, notably the Wa, who are engaged in their own battles for territory and control of the drug trade.

throughout the rainy season months in the latter half of 1995, when intelligence reports suggested up to 10,000 Burmese troops had gathered around the MTA base.

lysts estimated he spent \$5 million a month on his army.

States vie for control of Ellis Island

Ian Katz in New York

TO THE millions of immigrants who disembarked there after fleeing the Old World, it did not matter much which state owned Ellis Island: it was simply America, land of the free.

surprising that the ownership is contestable. Ellis Island lies just north of the Statue of Liberty, easily on New Jersey's side of the line down the middle of the Hudson River which separates the two states.

New York, which currently controls Ellis Island, views New Jersey's claim as the thin end of the wedge.

seum and potentially much more if tentative plans to build a hotel or convention centre go ahead.

Algerian rebel surrenders

The second-ranking leader of an Algerian militant armed group has turned himself in to authorities, according to a statement released yesterday by security services.

Costa Rica kidnap

Heavily armed gunman stormed a hotel in northern Costa Rica and abducted two European women into nearby mountains, the government said yesterday.

theObserver
10p this Sunday
See TheGuardian on Saturday for details

كسبا من الاموال

Serbs detain Sarajevans for prisoner exchanges Abductions test Nato's resolve

Julian Borger in Sarajevo

NATO is facing the first significant test of its determination to implement the Dayton peace plan: the disappearance of several Bosnian civilians while travelling through Serb areas of Sarajevo.

The government has accused the Bosnian Serb police of abducting 16 people in the past week as they drove through Serb-held territory. Spokesmen for the implementation force (I-FOR) said they had no independent confirmation of the reports. But the UN police said that the Bosnian Serb authorities had "given indications" that they were holding an unspecified number of civilians and were prepared to exchange them for Serbs detained by the government during the war.

"The Serbs told us their action was in response to the arrest of two of [their] people by the Bosnian government in October," a UN police official said.

The disappearances clearly contravene the Dayton agreement's guarantee of free movement.

Nato has appeared uncertain how to react to the incidents, raising doubt about how far I-FOR is prepared to go to enforce the guarantee.

The treaty says it is I-FOR's responsibility "to observe and prevent interference with the movement of civilian populations, refugees, and displaced persons, and to respond appropriately to deliberate violence to life and person".

But Colonel Konrad Freytag, a Nato spokesman, said yesterday that it was the res-

possibility of the two parties to the agreement (the Muslim-Croat Federation and the Bosnian Serbs) to guarantee freedom of movement. I-FOR, he said, could only work to create "a secure environment".

Nato spokesmen say it will be the job of the UN civilian police — co-ordinated by the UN high representative, Carl Bildt — to investigate individual incidents.

So far there are only a handful of UN police in Bosnia, and Mr Bildt, a former Swedish prime minister, is not due to arrive in Sarajevo until later this week, after his Christmas holiday.

His offices in the city centre are still deserted — the lease has not even been signed —

'So far Mr Bildt has not done much,' the president said. His officials were less diplomatic

leaving a conspicuous gap in the implementation of the agreement.

"This first month is a critical time for the whole Dayton plan," a member of the outgoing UN peacekeeping mission said. "You have Serbs threatening to leave Sarajevo, and you have a challenge to the freedom of movement. And there's no one there on the political side."

One of Mr Bildt's aides, speaking from Brussels, blamed the delay in setting up the office on problems in securing funds from contributing countries. The US had not yet paid, he said.

The Bosnian president, Alija Izetbegovic, said last week: "So far Mr Bildt has not done much." His officials have been less diplomatic, accusing Mr Bildt of wasting time.

They want his office to do more to convince Serbs to remain in the Sarajevo suburbs due to be handed over to government control. And they want I-FOR to enforce freedom of movement.

One, Amir Hadziomeragic, said three lorry drivers had been seized on Christmas Day in the Serb Sarajevo suburb of Ilidza, and 13 others, including a family of four, had disappeared in the area since then.

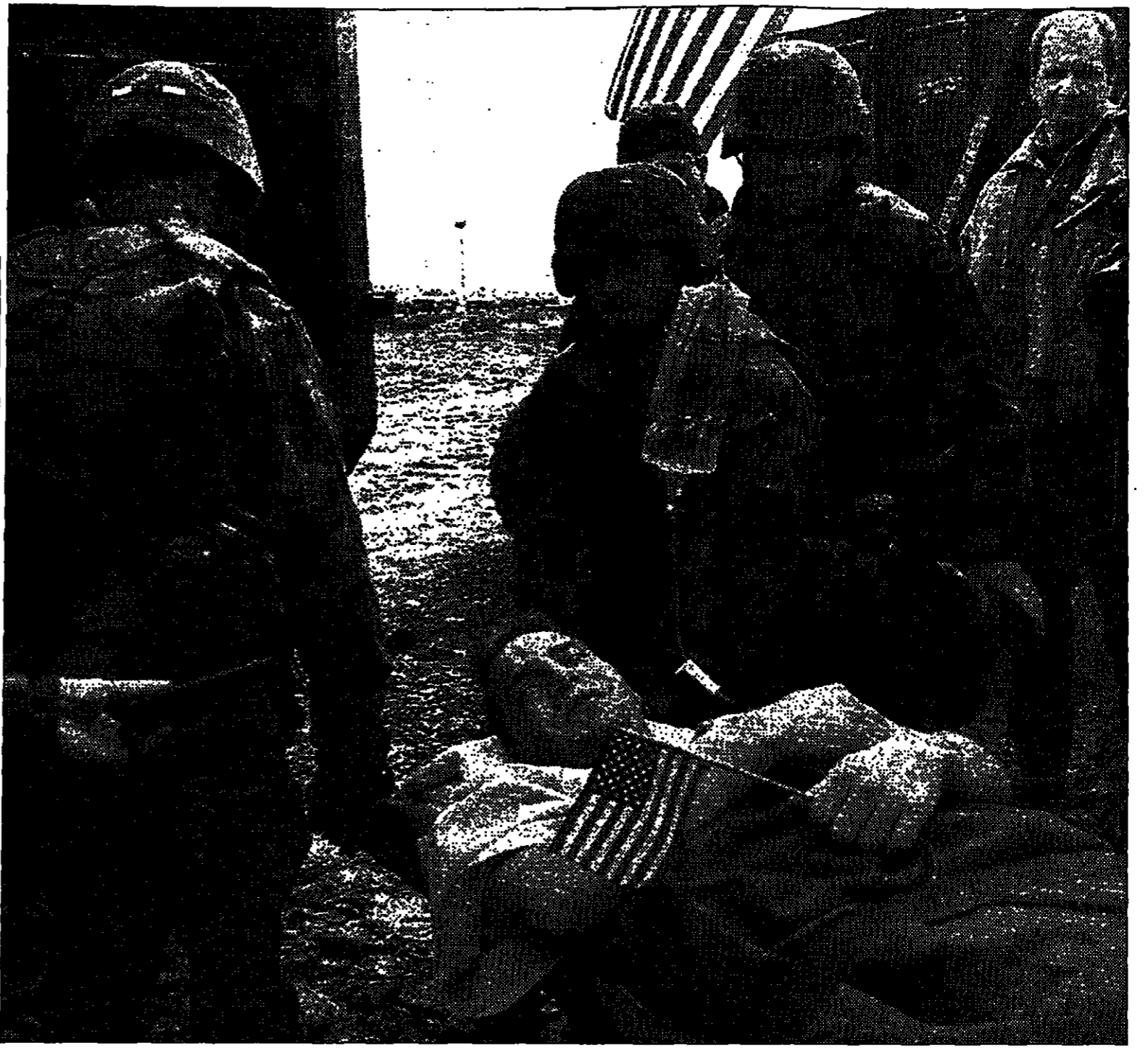
News of the disappearances was broadcast on Bosnian television, since which there has been a perceptible decline in the numbers of Sarajevans using these routes in and out of the city.

The Bosnian government is reluctant to exchange Serbs captured during the war for its own citizens seized since the signing of the peace treaty, fearing that would lead to further abductions.

Nato officers said yesterday that the incidents would be raised at a regular meeting of military officials from both sides, once the disappearances had been documented.

President Clinton may visit US troops in Bosnia before his State of the Union speech, scheduled for January 23, the White House said yesterday.

The defence secretary, William Perry, and the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, General John Shalikashvili, who are visiting Bosnia today, would be consulted before a decision was taken, the spokesman said.



Flag bearer... Specialist Martin John Begosh, who goes into the history books as the first US member of I-FOR wounded in Bosnia, is carried to an ambulance at a field hospital in Croatia to be flown to Germany. His leg was shattered when his mis-directed field car hit a mine. Commander Ola Molvaer of the Norwegian navy told a news conference yesterday that it could take 30 years to clear the country of mines. PHOTOGRAPH: LYNNE SLADKY

Russians make best of bad jobs

Stephanie Simon in Moscow reviews career opportunities in the post-Soviet labour free-for-all

YULIA wanted work as an accountant. So she pulled on a tight green miniskirt, squeezed into high heels and pranced on to the stage of a hotel ballroom, batting her lashes and swinging her hips as she tried to win a job balancing books.

Nearby, danced Valeria, hopeful of landing a managerial post. Also Irina, in body-hugging white, her law courses all but forgotten as she flirted behind a cat-eye mask and dreamed of finding secretarial work.

Slinky music played, Champagne corks popped. From the audience, businessmen studied the stage, looking, they said, for the perfect typist or waitress or nurse or assistant. An employment agency had set up this "job fair" — with 150 young women strutting their stuff to find a job.

The women answered questions such as: "Describe your ideal boss." At the MC's command, each dragged a man from the audience and shimmied with him on stage.

In her turn at the microphone, Valeria Yelatushkin was asked to explain how she might turn away a troublesome visitor demanding to see her boss — her sole chance to display her professional skills.

Although a summary of her work experience was available backstage, for those who bothered to ask, she acknowledged that prospective employers might find it "hard to see my qualifications".

Still, she thought that this show might help her get a job. "I still have hope," she said.

And why not? With the economy crumbling and politicians fumbling, finding a job in Moscow has become a free-for-all.

In the old days, when the Soviet system made unemployment a crime, the government funnelled every able adult into a job.

Now citizens are on their own. And they are finding job hunting frustrating. "They're not used to it," explained Alexander Tkachenko, a demographer who heads the labour ministry's population department. "Before, everything was well-defined: you got a job when you got out of school. That was our planned economy."

The capitalist system, which requires self-promotion, "is only now beginning to grow", he added.

The Russian version of Cosmopolitan magazine recently printed tips on writing CVs. But many students still graduate with no idea of how to write a covering letter.

There are always the small ads. But Russia's help-wanted sections tend to be maddeningly vague. In some newspapers, three quarters of ads say simply "Work", then list a phone number. No description of the job, no hint of a location, no clue about wages.

Often the work turns out to involve telephone or door-to-door sales. In the new Russia, as in the old, jobseekers need to know someone — or at least know someone who knows someone — to have a shot at any well-paying vacancy.

"Finding work if you don't have friends [in high places] is impossible," Alla Chernyuk, aged 22, said. "If you come into a business off the street, they don't even want to talk to you."

Trained as a fashion designer, Ms Chernyuk has given up hope of working in the declining clothing industry. Instead, she hopes to tag on to an emerging aerobics craze and teach exercise classes.

Ms Chernyuk has a definite advantage in her hunt for work: she's pretty. "I don't know why, but your appearance is very important," she said. "You apply to be a secretary and they say you have to be a certain height."

Some women have taken to describing their figures in job-wanted ads. Even classified ads that do not mention height or weight still target a narrow sector. A company looking for a secretary demanded a woman with "an honest face". — Los Angeles Times.

French 'sleaze' inquiry targets Renault boss

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

THE chairman of Renault was formally placed under investigation yesterday in connection with a phone-tapping scandal involving Alexander Lukashenko, a demographer who heads the labour ministry's population department.

Louis Schweitzer, who was appointed chairman of the state-owned car company by President Mitterrand, is expected to be summoned for questioning later this month.

The news could not come at a worse time for Renault, which is expected to complete its privatisation in 1996 after transforming years of losses into a profit of 3.6 billion francs (€480 million) in 1994.

Mr Schweitzer was head of the cabinet of the Socialist prime minister, Laurent Fabius, during the phone-tapping operation, which lasted from 1983 to 1986.

The operation, which is being investigated by Judge Jean-Paul Valat, is known to have targeted more than 100 right-wing journalists, lawyers and politicians in the run-up to the 1986 general election. The election was won by the right wing and resulted in Jacques Chirac succeeding Mr Fabius as prime minister.

Four other men who were close to President Mitterrand at the time of the operation are already under investigation. They include his former cabinet chief, Gilles Ménage,

who until recently was chairman of Electricité de France.

Mr Schweitzer, aged 52, is also being investigated for suspected complicity in the 1980s blood scandal when large stocks of HIV-infected blood products were transfused despite alleged government knowledge.

Opponents of the present right-wing government believe the two investigations against Mr Schweitzer are part of a game of political tit-

for-tat aimed at highlighting Socialist sleaze.

They point to a number of investigations which are quietly continuing into corruption-related activities by supporters of President Jacques Chirac, including an investigation into illegal funding of the president's Rally for the Republic party.

Claims last year that the prime minister, Alain Juppé, and President Chirac were living cheaply in flats owned

by the city of Paris were never fully investigated.

But the French have become accustomed to corruption in high places. In the biggest case, the chairman of the Paribas financial group, André Lévy-Lang, was placed under investigation last week for alleged accounting irregularities during the sale of the group's Ciments Français subsidiary.

Martin Bouygues, head of the world's largest construc-

tion company Bouygues SA, is under investigation for alleged influence peddling.

A third leading businessman, Pierre Botton, is appealing against his 1994 conviction for alleged misuse of corporate funds.

Pierre Stuard, the chairman of the Alcatel Alsthom telecommunications group, was forced to resign last year after he was investigated for alleged misuse of corporate funds.

France prepares for lean new year of tax and price increases

A NEW year hangover of tax and price rises hit France yesterday as business resumed after more than a month of strikes and holidays, writes Paul Webster in Paris.

Wage packets, already reduced in the public sector because of pay lost during protests against social security reforms, will be down again this month. A tax amounting to 0.5 per cent of all income, including pensions and benefits, has been introduced to cover a shortfall in national health, pension and family allowance funds.

Hospital fees have been raised by 27 per cent, tobacco is up by 4 per cent and televi-

sion licences by 4.5 per cent. Taxi fares will increase by 3 per cent and telephone rentals by 15.5 per cent.

But the biggest impact will be felt on January 11 when petrol will go up 3.5 per cent because of extra levies increasing the government take on a litre to 85 per cent.

Five million public sector workers face a wage freeze this year and no increase in family allowances.

Protests against government pay and social security policy are due to resume this week. The government has tried to take some of the sting out of protests by raising income support by 2.1 per cent to the equivalent of £315 a month.

News in brief

Palestinian campaign shift
Palestinian election officials, under international pressure, yesterday endorsed a three-week campaign by candidates for January 20 elections after earlier saying they would only allow two weeks.

Official campaigning is to run, retrospectively, from late December to January 18, the election body ruled, accepting that some candidates had begun to seek votes. — Reuters.

Liberia fighting
Fighting flared again in western Liberia yesterday after a

day-long truce in battles between guerrillas and African peacekeepers. — Reuters.

Banda appeal
State prosecutors in Malawi yesterday filed an appeal before the country's highest court against the acquittal of ousted dictator Kamuzu Banda on conspiracy to murder charges. — AP.

Lion cub eaten
One of two rare Indian lion cubs born on New Year's Day at Zurich zoo has been eaten by its parents, the Swiss news agency reported yesterday. Less than 200 Indian lions remain in the wild. — Reuters.

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Horoscopes are often said to be "harmless fun", but I can't see anything either funny or harmless in a lucrative con-trick which preys on people's ignorance and fear.
Francis Wheen

Let the voters decide

Ms Nicholson's duty is greater than Mr Major's

THE NEW Liberal Democrat MP for Devon West and Torridge is wrong to regard a byelection in her West Country seat as a waste of public funds.

There ought to be no ducking the fact that when a politician stands for election under one banner and then switches allegiance to another, then the electorate has to some extent been taken for a ride.

However the argument for an early encounter with the voters does not unroll quite so seamlessly in the case of the government as a whole.

either that opponents of the Conservatives are bursting for the moment when they are finally forced out. It can't come too soon. But, sadly, this does not mean that we will get the election.

It is also important to say that the loss of an overall Commons majority — if and when it does take place — ought not in itself to be a sufficient reason for a government to resign.

Given its own history in government, Labour needs to beware of claiming that minority administrations are illegitimate.

A mellow hint for Hong Kong

Mr Rifkind's clout may rise as his bargaining power falls

A NEW DAWN in relations between China and Britain has been offered by Beijing: Malcolm Rifkind, on his way there next week, will have more modest expectations.

Mr Rifkind found himself wrong-footed on the subject in October when the Chinese foreign minister Qian Qichen visited London.

if not all of the current LegCo will be chosen for the post-handover body. That seems unlikely since the Preparatory Committee does not contain even a token number of members of the majority Democratic Party.

This tough posture seems to reflect internal high-level tensions as Beijing waits for its current great leader to pass away.

Ticket to be taken for a ride

One sure way forward for the railways: drop privatisation

THE SURVEY by the Consumers' Association into the ticketing practices of the new train companies is so damning it ought to sound the death knell for privatisation.

Remember, this is the privatisation that hardly anyone wanted. The Government tried to justify its Kafkaesque break up of a unified railway system into 70 different units, including 25 separate train companies competing against each other.



Letters to the Editor

Hitch-hiking: is it safe?

IT WOULD be a very sad day when no one dares to thumb a lift (Search for Céline reveals the end of the road for hitchhiking, December 30).

I find your statistic of only one in 50 people having hitched hard to believe — I don't know anyone of my age group (mid-20s) who has not at some point hitchhiked.

I AM a hitcher and a woman. I hitchhike because I love the cold, wet, windy hard shoulders of roads, and the thrill of fearing for my life.

Railroaded

THE shape of things to come is often a reflection of times past. In Roy Jenkins's recent speech in the House of Commons we read of a rail journey from Euston to Laurencekirk made by "Victorian politics" swooping eagle.

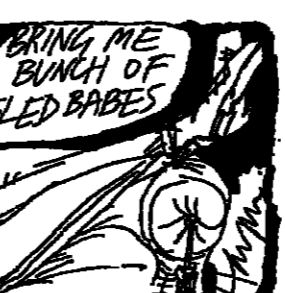
I AM appalled by your decision to accept an advertisement on behalf of the murderous regime in Nigeria, seeking to malign those who are persecuted both by themselves and by our counterparts in Britain.

HAS IT occurred to Joanna Trollope (Letters, January 2) that the residents of Moss Side might also object to comparison with Aston Magna?

Please include a full postal address, even on e-mailed letters, and a daytime telephone number. We may edit letters for clarity and concision.

chooses to interview? Middle England with their car outside their semi? I can find you 50 people who cannot afford a train fare, let alone a car, just in my neighbourhood.

ON the day you reported the discovery of Céline Figard's murdered body, was it really necessary to illustrate a piece on the censorship of pornography on the Internet with a woman lying bound and gagged?



Pulp and the patriarchy thing

SUZANNE MOORE'S clarity of thought is being clouded by her crush on "sex insect" Jarvis Cocker of Pulp (Triumph of the nerd genius, December 28).

THOSE skeletons in the Cabinet: NEW Year's Day is always brightened by revelations from 30 years ago and 1995 was no exception (Attack on Rhodesia vetoed, January 1).

THE WREKIN: High above the Wrekin's western flank a raven calls into the bright cold air. Her voice is clear and evocative, marking out the boundaries of a world which knows nothing of frozen post-Christmas shopping.

Nicholson and the triumph of principle over party politics

ROY Hattersley sees deflection as potentially damaging to party politics (Dancing to the same tune at a different party, January 1).

THE nature of our system means that individuals have to take the bad with the good in the political package a party offers.

UNLIKE Hattersley, I do not fear the weakening of party political machines. Doubtless he would argue that it has given us "strong" government, but it has also given us 17 years of "one-party dictatorship" with disastrous policies such as the poll tax.

Why I turned down a CBE

HAVING myself declined a CBE, I still respect Claire Rayner's "wavering acceptance" of her New Year Honour (Dear agony aunt, January 1).

A Country Diary

THE WREKIN: High above the Wrekin's western flank a raven calls into the bright cold air. Her voice is clear and evocative, marking out the boundaries of a world which knows nothing of frozen post-Christmas shopping.

IF MORE Conservative MPs had consulted their consciences, the country would have been saved from such iniquitous policies as railway privatisation.

IF THE Liberal Democrats think that Emma Nicholson's defection makes Torridge and West Devon even more winnable, they have not been thinking clearly.

IN the past, when meeting Labour supporters on the doorstep, Liberal Democrats have claimed: "We're Labour really." Now, because of Ms Nicholson's track record in Parliament, her new political colleagues will be perceived as being "really Tory".

service rendered — as assessed by senior civil servants? This year, as usual, the lowest awards include craftsmen and gardeners; one or two steps up for teachers and nurses; up again for top civil servants, junior politicians and professors; yet some of the highest awards are for making money.

mud lead to the top of the Little Hill, the nub-end of the Wrekin at the southern stretch of its hogback. Here three jagged, enigmatic Scots pines are all that remain of a crown of trees.

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom right corner.

1996 Jan 3 Wed

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
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Finance Guardian

City curbs utilities' leaks

Insider dealing targeted by new code of conduct

Simon Beavis
Industrial Editor

THE Stock Exchange yesterday tried to close the door on leaks of price-sensitive information from the regulated utilities regulators when it produced a long awaited code of conduct to block insider dealing.

The code was provoked by the leak of details of an electricity price review last July which led to shares worth £1 billion changing hands on the

day before the new controls were to have been published. But the guidelines are unlikely to stem criticism of the watchdogs, their industries or the Exchange, as they do no more than endorse the procedures followed last summer by the electricity regulator, Professor Stephen Littlechild.

The Exchange, headed by chief executive Michael Lawrence, said the new code had been issued with the full agreement of 11 regulatory bodies and followed three months of "extensive consultation". It warned that leaks

of price-sensitive information "may, in some circumstances, lead to insider dealing". But one of its main conclusions is that regulators must still issue information to companies it monitors up to 24 hours in advance on a strictly "need to know" basis.

Last July Prof Littlechild followed precisely this procedure, providing the 12 chief executives of the regional electricity companies with copies of his price review 24 hours in advance so that they could prepare their responses.

Within four hours, on the Exchange's advice, the regulator was forced to bring forward the announcement of his review findings after details of the controls were leaked to the stock market.

Although the Stock Exchange immediately launched an insider dealing enquiry, interviewing officials at the companies and at the Office of Electricity Regulation (Ofreg),



the source of the leak was never uncovered.

News that copies of the report had been handed to 12 companies in advance provoked outrage last July, but the Exchange has not chosen to try halting the practice. It has also resisted a compromise measure where early

copies are kept under wraps until the close of the market on the preceding day.

Under the new guidelines, regulators are being asked to keep lists of people to whom the information has been shown in advance and to advise other interested parties of the confidential nature of the information.

The Exchange will also provide an informed view of the price sensitivity of the material, the new code says.

Watchdogs are being asked to consult the Exchange as well if the information has been leaked and, where appropriate, release the information immediately.

Underlining the importance of the new code, senior officials from the Exchange said that it was aimed at preventing disorderly markets in the shares of regulated industries

and at stopping potential insider dealing.

Richard Kilsby, the Exchange's director of market services, said: "Our concern is to preserve London's reputation for maintaining fair and orderly markets, and we are delighted that the industry regulators have joined with us in setting standards for the handling of price-sensitive information within their remit."

The Exchange consulted with Ofreg and its gas and water counterparts, Ofgas and Ofwat. Other bodies involved were the Civil Aviation Authority, the Environment Agency, the Gaming Board of Great Britain, the Independent Television Commission and the watchdogs for the National Lottery and the Rail industry.

In an unusual move, the Office of Fair Trading was closely involved in the discussions, even though it is not an industry regulator.

Notebook

Record sales talk has ring of truth



Edited by Mark Milner

TO PARAPHRASE Mark Twain, the death of the consumer has been greatly exaggerated. Far from Christmas being the harbinger of recession — as some of the gloomier forecasters were telling us a couple of months ago — we now find that shops were packed to bursting and tills jingling merrily.

Some of the evidence for this, it is true, comes from retailers themselves and this needs to be treated with caution. All the upbeat quotes have tended to come from big chains or large department stores, where sales have held up reasonably well over the past year or so. Little or nothing has been heard from the independent retailers, where the cut-throat price war between supermarkets and the drift to out-of-town shopping has made life very tough indeed.

of an incident last summer when it became apparent that the contents of a highly sensitive report by electricity regulator, Stephen Littlechild, were known in the stock market ahead of their official release.

The source of the leak has not yet been identified but it emerged at the time that, in line with the then practice, Mr Littlechild's report had been made available to senior industry executives some 24 hours ahead of the announcement on the understanding that the contents would remain confidential.

Under yesterday's Stock Exchange guidelines, there is nothing to prevent a repeat of last summer's episode. The guidelines recommend that the period between the regulator giving information to a company and its advisers and its general announcement should be kept to a minimum and should not normally be more than 24 hours.

Of course, regulators need to talk to the companies they regulate and those companies will always be able to make an educated guess, from the information they are asked to provide, about the direction of their regulator's thinking. But as the Exchange itself notes, the more certain or specific a piece of information, the more price sensitive it will be. Nothing could be more specific, and hence more price sensitive, than a regulator's final conclusions.

Despite Stock Exchange protestations that companies need time to draw up their responses to complex issues, it is less than obvious why regulators' conclusions should be made available in advance to the industry. It is rather more apparent why they should not.

Predator Granada cries 'quick fix' at £800m share buy-back plan launched on Day 39

Forte defence centres on 'aggressive' hotels strategy

Ian King

FORTE yesterday played its last card in the fight against Granada's £3.4 billion hostile bid, promising shareholders a multi-million-pound loyalty package.

The hotels-to-motorway services group announced a bigger-than-expected £800 million share buy-back plan, and promised shareholders dividend rises of at least 20 per cent a year over the next three years.

In its "Day 39" defence document — so called because the 39th day is the last in which a bid target can publish any new information — Forte said its prospects were excellent as an independent company.

Forte also pledged to give its 68 per cent Savoy Hotel stake to shareholders, and committed itself to "aggressive" expansion of its Meridien and Porthouse brands.

Unveiling the package, chairman and chief executive Sir Rocco Forte said "new Forte" would be a major international hotel company with an "outstanding" position in London.

He added: "The new Forte will be a highly efficient and very valuable pure hotel company. Our proposals offer significantly more value than Granada, and shareholders should reject [Granada's] ill-conceived bid."

Granada immediately hit back, accusing Forte of attempting a "quick fix", and dropping a clear hint that it would raise its offer. It must do so by next Tuesday.

Sir Rocco rebutted suggestions that Forte should clear its debts with the £1 billion

proceeds from its proposed sale to Whitbread of Little Chef, Happy Eater and Welcome Break, insisting it was "lax" for a company like Forte not to have borrowings.

He went on: "We're an asset-rich company, those assets have value, and that gives us a lot of flexibility."

But Sir Rocco, who also announced the appointment of three new executive and two new non-executive directors, refused to bow to City calls for him to split his job of chairman and chief executive. Defending the decision, he said: "It makes sense to carry on with the present structure. The board needs a recognised leader."

For Granada, chief executive Gerry Robinson said: "For Forte to meet these commitments on dividend growth, while achieving a prudent level of dividend cover, requires profits to double in three years. That is a tall order for a management that has conspicuously failed to deliver profits, earnings and dividends in the past."

Charles Allen, chief executive designate, added: "We haven't said it [the bid] is final."

Shares for Forte jumped 12½p to 343p on the news, reflecting City hopes of a higher bid from Granada, while Granada shares fell 3p to 642p.

Analyst Greg Bechley, of broker Kleinwort Benson, puts Forte's break-up value at £3.6 billion. He said the detailed outline of the group's strategy, along with the package for shareholders, was Forte's strongest possible defence. He added: "This is a heavyweight — it seriously puts pressure on Granada to raise its offer."



Roaring for Fortes... Sir Rocco Forte (centre) and other board members launching their second defence document in reply to Granada's hostile bid yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: E. HAMILTON WEST

The story so far...

- Nov 22: Granada launches shock £3.4 billion bid for Forte, as predicted in that morning's Guardian.
- Nov 23: Sir Rocco Forte says Granada's Gerry Robinson is building a "sprawling conglomerate".
- Nov 28: Forte sells catering supplier Puritan Maid for £7.5 million.
- Dec 2: Forte announces sale of Lillywhites for £28.5 million.
- Dec 4: Forte announces plans to demerge restaurant and hotel businesses and to sell Savoy stake.
- Dec 6: Forte sells Griesons wine merchants for £29.5 million.
- Dec 8: Forte publishes first defence document, detailing proposals for demerger and forecasting full year profits of £185 million.
- Dec 9: Granada asks Takeover Panel to intervene if Forte sells any "trophy" hotels.
- Dec 11: Savoy directors meet Forte to formally discuss bid. Forte asks Takeover Panel to investigate reports that Granada intends to make £100 million extra profits from Forte in its first year of control. Granada denies making the claim.
- Dec 12: Granada shareholders back bid, giving board authority to raise offer if necessary.
- Dec 13: Forte claims Granada will cut at least 5,000 jobs if it wins.
- Dec 14: Granada says it can make an extra £100 million from Forte in first year of control. Takeover Panel criticises Forte over wording in defence document.
- Dec 15: Granada shares fall below underwriting price.
- Dec 16: High Court makes Forte a party to Forte Council's case.
- Dec 18: Talks to sell Forte's White Hart hotel chain collapse.
- Dec 20: Forte sells US Travelodge chain for £114 million.
- Dec 27: Forte confirms planned sale of Welcome Break, Happy Eater and Little Chef to Whitbread for £1 billion.
- Dec 29: Forte raises full year profits forecast by another £5 million.
- Dec 30: Forte publishes revaluation of hotels portfolio, valuing them at an extra £355 million.
- Jan 2: Forte announces £800 million share buy-back in its final defence document.

The developing plot...
Jan 9: Granada has until today to increase its offer.
Jan 23: Bid period ends under takeover rules — a winner and loser will emerge.

Ritzy or cheap, it's hotel-value hell

Accuracy in valuation is a bit of a myth, argues ROGER COWE; a hotel is worth what the buyer will pay

FORTE has announced that the latest valuation of its hotels added £355 million to its price. But rather than ask what a hotel is worth, it is tempting to ask whether a hotel valuation is worth the paper it is printed on.

The point was driven home viciously by the Queens Moat Place three years ago. The hotel group had to reduce the value of its property by more than £1 billion, but even then was not sure where it stood since two prominent firms of valuers had come up with figures some £500 million apart. Worse still, the value was then increased by £100 million during the following year.

Putting a price on a hotel is a bit more scientific than the slightly cynical valuations that most householders have suffered. But it still relies enormously on

be catered for in professional valuations, which have to rely on normal expectations of what objective, financially-motivated people would pay.

Clearly, that must be based on the profit or cash flow which the hotel can be expected to generate, but that raises two big problems. First, as the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' guidance puts it: "The valuer should... form an opinion as to the future trading potential and level of turnover likely to be achieved". Our italics emphasise that one valuer's opinion is unlikely to be the same as another's, and that any opinion will depend on views of the economy — which will determine profitability.

The second difficulty, even if such opinions are uniform, is how to convert anticipated earnings into a selling price — what multiplier or "capitalisation factor" should be applied?

As the hotel accountants pointed out in the guidance that emerged after the Queens Moat affair: "The determination of the

capitalisation factor is in part judgmental and must reflect the valuer's perception of the risk or security associated with the hotel and its profit potential."

The accountants prefer the more complex and more scientific approach of using a discounted cash flow method. This has the advantage of giving more weight to cash flows in the earlier years, but as they admit: "It does rely on the subjective judgment of the valuer to assess the degree of risk attaching to the earnings potential of the subject hotel."

So in the end, judgment and economic circumstances remain crucial, as well as the accountants' notions of best practice. Forte's own experience illustrates that. Two years ago, the group had to knock more than £400 million from its balance-sheet asset value after a revaluation. However, last year slightly more was added back because of a change in accounting rules.

What's a hotel worth? A thousand times the price of a Greek urn. Harry.

Tough task

GRANADA'S Gerry Robinson could be forgiven for feeling like a man who thought he was climbing in the ring with Mr Blobby only to be confronted by Frank Bruno. Since Granada launched its £3.4 billion takeover bid for Forte, the latter has put up a spirited defence, culminating in yesterday's defence document.

That said, however, Forte is by no means out of the wood. The case against Granada could clinch the bid if it topped its offer to around 375p a share, about 50p above the current level. Mr Robinson could probably muster that kind of fire power, but may find it harder to persuade himself such a price represents value for money for his shareholders.

Even if he comes in with something less than that figure, Forte shareholders will still have to ponder whether the corporate document demonstrated during the bid battle will spill over into the operational management, should Granada be repelled. If Forte does retain its independence, the dividend pledge in the corporate document will certainly set the management a tough task over the coming years, though in the short term the £800 million buy-back programme might help to prop up the share price.

Keeping quiet

IT IS one thing to close the stable door after the horse has bolted. Having promised to do so, however, it is quite another then to leave the door wide open. Yet it is hard to put any other interpretation of the (Stock Exchange's) guide to industry regulators over the disclosure of price sensitive information.

The guidelines are a result

AT&T puts cost of break-up at \$6bn and 40,000 jobs

CHris Barrie

THE loss of 40,000 jobs and a \$6 billion (£3.87 billion) pre-tax charge against fourth quarter earnings were yesterday announced as the cost of a radical restructuring at AT&T, the American telecommunications company.

With the group preparing to split itself into three companies by the end of the year, the board admitted that up to 30,000 employees are facing compulsory redundancy. So far 6,500 managers have accepted voluntary redundancy while another 4,000 will leave as the group divests non-core businesses.

Describing the job cuts and other measures as essential if the businesses are to be competitive, chairman Robert Allen said: "Compassion will be an essential ingredient in the handling of the job cuts."

AT&T is separating into three groups: telecoms and technology, and computing. The services division is set to shed 17,000 jobs bringing the workforce down to 110,000, while the systems and technology company will lose 23,000 people leaving a workforce of 108,000.

The measures follow a \$1.5 billion charge against third quarter earnings to cover the cost of cutting 8,500 jobs from a workforce of 43,000 at the computer group, Global Information Solutions.

AT&T hoped yesterday that the number of staff facing compulsory job losses would fall as voluntary schemes were extended.

It also sought to reassure the state of New Jersey, where it has 48,000 employees, by pledging to keep more than 40,000 people on the payroll.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

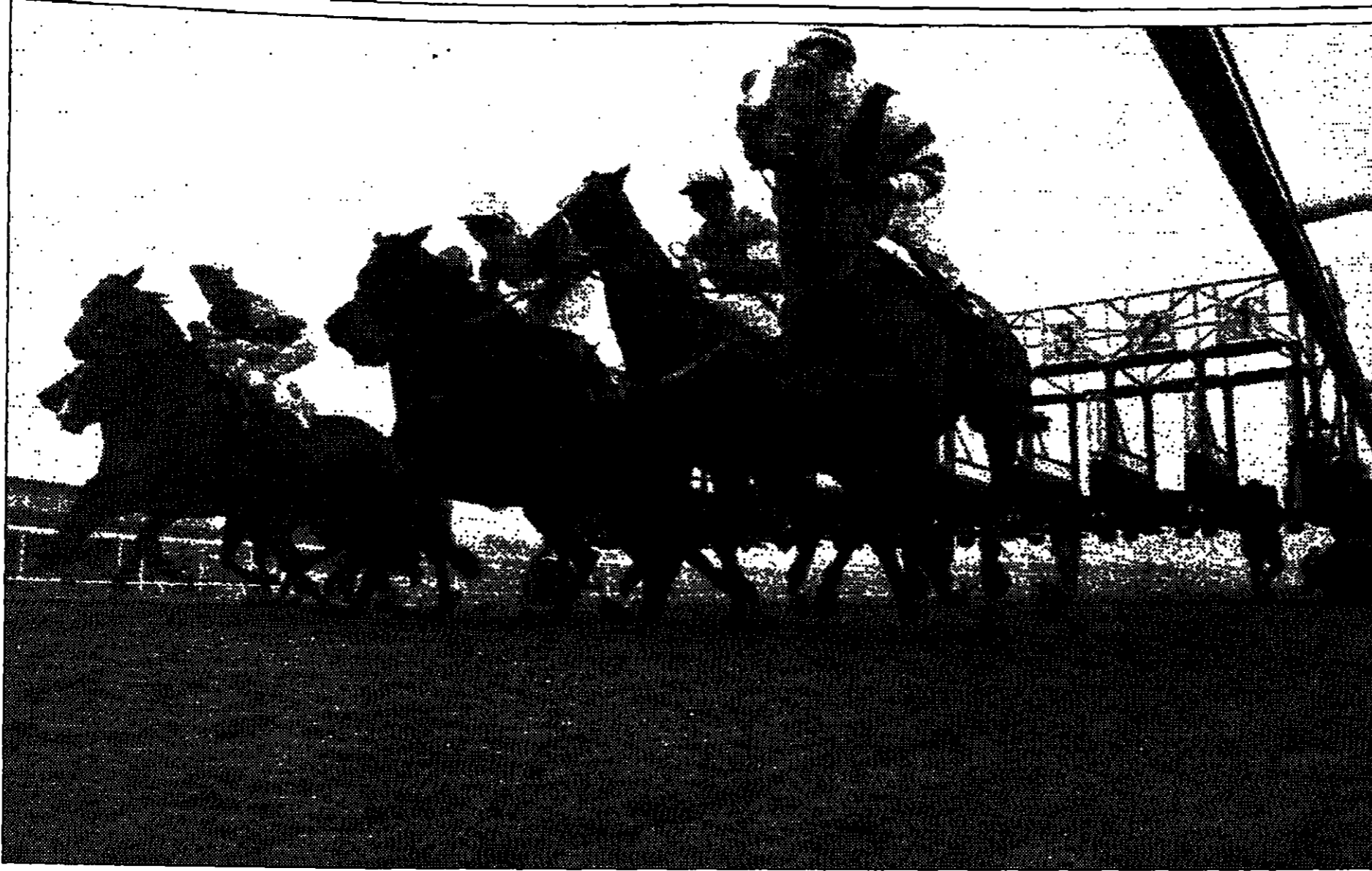
Australia 2.01	France 7.90	Italy 2.400	Singapore 2.14
Austria 15.00	Germany 2.15	Mexico 0.5375	South Africa 5.44
Belgium 44.00	Greece 363.00	Netherlands 2.42	Spain 181.25
Canada 2.05	Hong Kong 11.72	New Zealand 2.31	Sweden 10.30
Cyprus 0.965	India 54.59	Norway 9.54	Switzerland 1.72
Denmark 8.24	Ireland 0.96	Portugal 225.00	Turkey 86.882
Finland 6.84	Israel 4.86	Saudi Arabia 5.75	USA 1.5075

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli sheqel).



David Davies

... over



Flat out from the start... runners get away to a level break in the Keats Handicap at Lingfield yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARNON

Dreaper eyes cheap trip for Merry Gale

Graham Rick

MERRY GALE is a significant step closer to taking his chance in the King George VI Tripleprint Chase at Sandown on Saturday.

The Curragh Bloodstock Agency has arranged a flight from Dublin on Friday for James and horses to go into training, and Jim Dreaper's stable star is likely to join them.

Flying horses is expensive. When Merry Gale and Montelado travelled to Kempton for the abandoned Christmas meeting, it cost £4,000 each. If Dreaper had chartered a plane to fly Merry Gale over on Saturday, he would have had little change out of £8,000.

However, the cost of joining the Curragh Bloodstock Agency flight on an 18-hour charter will be much less, the final invoice depending on how many places are taken.

"We're trying to get Jim (Dreaper) helped out a bit," said Liam Spring of the CBA yesterday. "We have arranged the flight on Friday and it will go with or without Merry Gale, but now he has

the option." In the summer it is quite common for horses to travel between England and Ireland by horsebox and ferry, but at this time of year journeys across the Irish Sea can be subject to cancellation.

"There is no definite word about restaging the Ericsson Chase, and I would rather not hang around," Dreaper said. "Graham Bradley has not had a ride on Merry Gale this season. We need to get them into action."

The frost has come out of the ground at Sandown and is going to be now good to soft. "We would just have been able to race today," said Andrew Cooper, clerk of the course. "We have been quite surprised how sound the ground is. On the basis of the forecast that there will be very little rain here, the chances of heavy ground must be very slim."

All-weather Flat racing at Lingfield was the only meeting to survive yesterday but the jumpers return at the

Surrey course today, and some potentially useful horses line up for the Seven-oaks Novice Chase.

No Pain No Gain was unlucky at Fontwell in November when, rumoured after falling, he finished a close second to Candle King. Josh Gifford's novice made no mistake next time when accounting for Lookout Mountain by six lengths, but the form does not look outstanding.

Air Shot won two novice hurdles last season, and was a good second to Monday's Exeter winner Challenger Du Lac at Cheltenham in March. He returned to that course for his chasing debut in November and was travelling smoothly in third place when coming down four fences from home.

He should go well if completing the course this time, but I doubt if he will be good enough to cope with Nemuro (1.20) in receipt of only 7lb.

David Elsworth's horse beat Pridwell in the Welsh Champion Hurdle last season and won on his chasing debut at Exeter three weeks ago. He is best on a sound surface.

Kingdom Of Shades (12.50) appeals as the best of the day in the second division of the Horley Maiden Hurdle. Andy Turnell's horse has shown ability in all three of his races, and finished second to Divertimento on his reappearance at Windsor.

He met previous winners Mandy's Mantino and Buttercup Joe at Towcester next time and showed improved form to finish a close third.

Bon Voyage was beaten more than eight lengths when third to Kilcoran Bay and Darter over this course and distance 18 days ago and the merit of that performance can be judged on how Darter runs in the opening race.

King's Gold was comfortably defeated by Master Bevelled at Windsor last time and more danger may come from Myrcine Jale, who had shown ability in bumpers before falling at the first on his hurdling debut here last month.

Today's card at Epsom has been called off because of frost but prospects are excellent for the rest of this week's meetings.

Wordsworth Limited Stakes, leading practically on the line to beat Posen Gold by a short head.

Weaver was involved in a crash on the A1 last week when a cow ran into the back of his BMW. "It jarrred me up a bit and I wore a neck collar for two days," said Weaver. "I have been riding out for Mark Johnson and I can say that about 120 of our 130 horses are really exciting."

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Wolverhampton all-weather card with form guide

Table with 2 columns: Race number and horse names. Races include 1.05 Lockon, 1.35 Doctor Bravos, 2.05 Abdominal, 2.35 Shaky, 3.05 Marco Street, 4.05 Cheeky Chappy.

Table with 2 columns: Race number and horse names. Races include 1.05 LADDER SERIES HANDICAP, 1.35 NORTON MAIDEN STAKES, 2.05 SUPER ROCKY, 2.35 SUPER ROCKY, 3.05 SUPER ROCKY.

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Table with 2 columns: Race number and horse names. Races include 7.05 OAK HANDICAP, 7.35 OAK HANDICAP, 8.05 OAK HANDICAP.

Table with 2 columns: Race number and horse names. Races include 8.05 OAK HANDICAP, 8.35 OAK HANDICAP, 9.05 OAK HANDICAP.

Lingfield runners and riders

Table with 2 columns: Race number and horse names. Races include 1.20 TUDOR FAIRY, 1.50 KINGDOM OF SHADES, 1.50 MURPHY, 1.50 LITTLE LEADER.

Table with 2 columns: Race number and horse names. Races include 1.20 HOLEY MAIDEN HURDLE, 1.50 KINGDOM OF SHADES, 1.50 MURPHY.

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Olazabal ready to stick toe in the water

David Davies on a cautious return for the Spanish Master

JOSE-MARIA Olazabal, the last European to win a major championship — the US Masters in April 1994 — is to restart his injury-affected career by playing in Singapore and Perth, Western Australia this month.

The Spaniard, who had to refuse an invitation to play in the Ryder Cup matches last September because of an arthritic condition, has still not fully recovered. But yesterday his manager, Sergio Gomez, said: "He has gone from having a big pain and being unable to walk to having an inconvenience."

"He was recovering well for the last three weeks, there has been a stop in his progression. He has been playing nine holes and hitting balls, and he has not got worse but he has not got any better either."

In an attempt to improve matters Olazabal takes delivery today of a new pair of shoes which have taken two months to make. They come from FootJoy, the footwear manufacturer that Olazabal endorses, and are based on a mould that was taken of his afflicted foot in the week before the Ryder Cup at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, New York.

It is hoped that they will ease the pressure on the Spaniard's foot while walking — the hitting of shots is not in itself causing pain. Olazabal's decision to play in the Johnnie Walker Classic in Singapore from January 25-28 and in the Hezeken Classic in Perth the following week is something of a surprise, not least to his manager.

"When he told me he wanted to play in the Hezeken, I said to him, 'But it is against your religion to play in Euro-

pean Tour events outside Europe.' But he told me that as he had not played at all since the Lanocme Trophy in Paris in early September he needed to play somewhere. He has to get ready to try and win another Masters title."

Olazabal, a leading critic of the European Tour's policy of spreading itself thinly across the world, will play in San Diego on the way back from Australia, take a month off, and then play in the Dubai Desert Classic, another event he has hitherto ignored. "He is looking for good course quality," said Gomez, "and everyone says that this is a good course. But yesterday, amazingly Olazabal is struggling to get into the Bell-South tournament in Atlanta, the US Tour event which this year falls the week before the Masters. He needs an invitation to play but, said Gomez, "memories are short. He has not been in the public eye recently."

His lack of activity is reflected in the fact that he has fallen out of the top 10 of the latest Sony world rankings, to 13th place. This is because, in part, the rankings have gone to a two-year points-gathering system rather than the three years on which they were previously based.

There has been no change at the top, where Greg Norman is well ahead of Nick Price and Ernie Els, but Barry Lane, who on Sunday won \$1 million (£650,000) when he took the Andersen Consulting World Championship in Arizona, moves up from 51st to 38th.

This is a huge bonus for, if he can retain that ranking, he is much more likely to receive invitations to the majors than when he was outside the top 50. Conversely Ian Woosnam will be struggling. He is the only player to drop out of the top 50, going from 41st to 53rd, reflecting the poor season he had last year.

Boxing

Regan still lord of the flies

ROBBIE REGAN has been reinstated as International Boxing Federation flyweight champion.

The 27-year-old Welshman knocked out Ferid Ben Said of Tunisia last month for the title vacated by Danny Romero of the US because of facial injuries. Last week the IBF nominated another American, Mark Johnson, to meet the now recovered Romero on February 2, a move that effectively

stripped Regan of the title, but Romero yesterday stood down, saying that his "body-fat percentage is zero" after dieting to eight stone. Johnson will now challenge Regan.

Ernie Magdaleno, beaten (cut eye) by Henry Maske of Germany for the IBF light-heavyweight title in 1994, died yesterday when his car was hit by a motorist being chased by police in his home town of Huntington Beach, California.

Results

Table listing race results for Lingfield, including race numbers, horse names, and winners.

RACELINE logo and contact information for Lingfield and Wolverhampton.

Olazabal sets date for comeback, page 13
Prunier and United part company, page 14

Managers call for midwinter break, page 14
D'Oliveira returns to Newlands, page 15

SportsGuardian

SMITH HOLDS FIRM AS DONALD ROUTS ATHERTON'S MEN



Out field... a jubilant Donald leads South Africa celebrations at the departure of Hick, caught in the slips by McMillan

PHOTOGRAPH: REBECCA NADEN

South Africa v England: Fifth Test, first day

Cork keeps England alive

Mike Selvey in Cape Town

IN THE film Memphis Belle the director condenses the wartime incidents of several years into one flying mission, and already after one day it looks as though the United Cricket Board of South Africa has managed to do much the same with the fifth and final Test. After four matches of rain, sluggish cricket, slow pitches and more rain, Newlands was the scene of relative carnage. England, a batsman light from the fourth Test and batting first on a pitch that did most things for the South African bowlers except sting Shosholozu, found the going desperate. They took almost eight overs to score a run, during which time they lost their cornerstone and talisman Mike Atherton, and 35 minutes beyond the tea interval found themselves destroyed by Allan Donald for 153, with Robin Smith battling his way to 66 before being last but not one to fall.

In the 20 overs that South Africa were allowed in reply they found batting no less fraught, losing Andrew Hudson, without scoring, and Hansie Cronje (12) to Dominic Cork — bowling with a dislocated finger on his left hand — before Gary Kirsten (15 not out) and Daryll Cullinan (seven not out) saw them to 44 without further loss by the close. England are still in the match, but only if Cork is given the support he deserves. Until yesterday Donald had hovered over the series like a thundercloud without producing the deluge. But it is a measure of the best bowlers that they can respond to an occasion and, given the snuff of favourable conditions, he relied upon to produce results. Donald bowled superbly — fast and rhythmical with controlled aggression and economy of effort. He claimed the England captain in his opening burst down-breeze from the Wynberg End and then, on switching to the Kelvin Grove End immediately after lunch, accounted for Graham Thorpe and Graeme Hick in his first over. The yorker that ripped out Cork's middle stump after tea, followed by the brutalising of Peter Martin, were fast bowlers' perks and although Paul Adams, to local delight, finished the innings off with the wickets of Smith and Devon Malcolm, Donald took the plaudits with figures of five for 46 from 16 overs, the sixth five-wicket haul of his career. Although the pitch has al-

ready produced enough action to keep a full ground buzzing, and has put a premium on batting technique and application, it does not appear adequate for the start of a Test. This is a relay surface, so no one could anticipate how it might play apart from the fact that it was unlikely to get better as the match wore on. But Donald's opening overs were significant: several deliveries that climbed sharply, a couple on the low side, and some lateral movement. After three overs he stood at the crease and kicked away at the foot-holds, another indication of a pitch that is loose. Batting last, in what ought to be a low-scoring match, will test the nerves. Without Smith's wholehearted effort England would be dead and buried by now. He has not been at his best this series, or indeed for some time,

but now when it mattered he produced only the second half-century by an England No. 3 since Mike Gatting made an emotional century at Adelaide almost a year ago. There is a feeling that Smith has become a restricted player, even off the pace that once was his lifeblood, relying heavily on the most withering square cut in the game at the expense of an all-round scoring ability. This means that bowlers who stay short of a length but deny him width can restrict his progress, and those who draw him forwards and move the ball away can get him out. Yet still he scraps. He found himself at the crease here after 30 ruthless minutes, Atherton having failed to keep down a rising ball, and got his own score moving by cutting Donald high over slips to the vacant third-man boundary.

At Centurion a similar stroke went for six; at The Wanderers it cost him his wicket. By the time he reached his half-century three hours later he had seen Alec Stewart drag a McMillan outswinger on to his leg stump; Thorpe, who played well before the interval, push too solidly at his first ball after lunch and edge to second slip; Hick go the same way, poking away from his body; and Russell, after 80 minutes' adhesion for nine runs, go likewise to Pollock, giving McMillan three successive catches. Thereafter no one had the willpower or skill to hang in with him. Twice he saw Adams pitch short and instinctively lean back to cut. The first time the ball rushed straight on and hit him in the midriff. The second, after more than four hours' effort and eight boundaries, was dragged from the under edge on to his stumps. You live by the sword and so you die.

Matthew Engel and scoreboard, page 15

Shock tactics can add spark to the defence



Vincent Hanna

EVENTS have conspired to make me think about electricity and its judicious use in sport. It's not just the floodlighting the warm baths and the undersoil heating, good things though they may be. I'm talking control and containment. After all, that is what happened to me — and to Murphy. And there are others who deserve it, too. On second thoughts, cancel the bit about undersoil heating. Clubs without it had at least some rest over Christmas. Am I dreaming or are there more sick and injured players about this year? Ten regulars were missing at White Hart Lane on Monday. Mind you, our fixtures list might have something to do with it. Nottingham Forest have so far played 26 games. Barcelona have played 19, and AC Milan 17; that's one more than the Miami Dolphins, who have just completed their full (and no doubt exhausting) season.

Incidentally, did you notice that the Miami Herald conducted a poll of fans on the future of the Dolphins' coach Don Shula, 66 tomorrow, who hasn't won a Super Bowl since 1973. The vote was 79 per cent for Shula to quit, after 25 years. The Dolphins' owner Wayne Huizenga said: "Don has all the options. I have none. He can coach as long as he wants." Sure, Wayne. The Republic of Ireland could do worse than appoint Shula as their new manager. He could bring them an unrivalled knowledge of long forward passes and gratuitous violence. I have a few more candidates for aversion therapy in 1996. Readers may wish to supply their own names — and collars. Dougie Smith, the referee who dropped his yellow card and then booked Paul Gascoigne for picking it up and waving it at him; at least Gazza can't help being a prat. Trevor Bailey for waiting until England were 187 for three on the final day of the fourth Test before confiding on Radio Four that because of the wicket "a result was never on". I was going to have Sam Hamman, the chairman of Wimbledon, and Joe Roy Mann, the Everton manager, fitted with special collars that prevent them approaching each other after games. But I think not. Sam apparently chased Joe out of the boardroom, down the stairs and across the car park. Ferguson badly needs more than marking of that quality.

Fifa to hit taller keepers by moving the goalposts

John Duncan on a scheme to increase the target to counter the four-inch growth of man

FIFA will agree to enlarge the goals when its rule-making body meets in March. The larger targets may be introduced into the Premiership in 1998-99. Fifa's general secretary Sepp Blatter said: "The guardians of the rules are in agreement about lengthening the goals by the diameter of two balls, which is around 50cm, and to increase the height by the diameter of one ball." Those guardians are the International Board, whose eight votes are divided equally between Fifa and the home associations. Yesterday Ken Riddon, the respected FA director of referees and an FA representative on the IB, confirmed that the changes were being seriously considered. "But this is jumping the gun a bit," he said. "What we have agreed to so far is for a sub-committee to have a look at the issue and come up with some recommendations on the degree of change that would be best. I

know the sub-committee hasn't met yet because I'm on it." There would be a period of experiments in smaller leagues before any global change was introduced. The other members of this sub-committee are Fifa's deputy general secretary Michel Zen-Ruffinen and the Scottish FA's George Cumming. They meet this month to discuss a report for the IB's March meeting in Rio de Janeiro. Fifa's key concern is the decline in goals at the World Cup and the need to compete globally with a plethora of sports in which scoring is more frequent. The average number of goals per World Cup game slipped from 3.0 in 1970 to 2.2 at Italia '90 and, despite a recovery to 2.7 in 1994, Fifa is desperate to avoid another World Cup final being decided by penalty shoot-out. More goals mean fewer draws, it believes. However, there is little evidence of a scoring crisis in European club football. There

have been 1,195 goals in both of the past Premiership seasons at an average of 2.537 per game. In Italy the goal average went up last season from 2.22 to 2.536; in Germany it increased from 2.92 to 3. Only Spain of the top nations saw a decline — from 2.602 to 2.542. One of the key arguments for bigger goals can be found in an obscure 1990 study by Roderick Floud, Kenneth Wachter and Annabel Gregory. Height, Health and History: Nutritional Status in the UK 1750-1980 reveals the increasing height of young adult British males since the 18th century. The current width of the goals — eight yards — was set in 1863, with today's standardised height — 6ft — set in 1866. Since then, says the report, the average height has gone up by 5.95 per cent from 66.23 inches to 70.17 inches. "In assessing this," said Riddon, "we have to consider the cost of the change. There has also been talk of making the ball smaller to achieve the same effect, and if it was shown that this didn't affect skill levels, that might be a better and cheaper option."

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BE THE BEST

Guardian Crossword No 20,539

Set by Paul

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32

- Across**
- 1 Extended sentence? (7)
 - 5 By carrying torch, get home (7)
 - 10, 9, 8 In a chap and give insult improperly (4,10,3)
 - 11 Returning home, I lean into the wind having lost cup with negative attitude (10)
 - 12 Figure that's upper-class (how Lenin lies?) (6)
 - 13 Upon fresh valley rolling, as gift ere given (8)
 - 14 Sharp ornament from Paris, bent (8)
 - 16 Shave — have less facial hair to hide away (5)
 - 17 Declaim it's right to quit Brussels (5)
 - 19 Dance of Spooner's tankard? (9)
 - 23 24 agreement (8)
- Down**
- 2 One hailing newlyweds with unoriginal present? (7)
 - 3 Tennis player to turn inside out (5)
 - 4 see 26ac
 - 6 Bound for lunar surface, leaderless lunar mission lifts off (6)
 - 7 For winter warmer, take a knife to Granny Smith (3-6)
 - 8 Muscle — and there's more after a moment (7)
 - 24 Shrink teaching about God to dictator (6)
 - 25, 27, 4, 2n That which is questionably counting votes... or noises? (10, 4, 7)
 - 28 A brick — this should sink in water (4, 3)
 - 29 As pen is to write a similar word (7)
- Solution tomorrow**
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The children's fortitude and desire to be ordinary in the face of all that was happening in their lives was an inspiration to all those who worked with them.

Caring for the West children

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سكنا من الامل